

# News From the Heights



## Summer Program Gets Outside

By Lisa DuChateau

You just don't hear enough about the positive things that youth today are doing. The youth that participated in our 2009 Summer Program spent their summer learning, volunteering, and having a lot of fun!

The Outdoor Club did a 'nature tour' of Madison traveling to anew destinations each week. We started out in our own backyard, planting tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers, and cantaloupe in pots behind the commu-



nity center. We are happy to say that the tomatoes and green peppers are doing well, but the other plants did not survive the summer. We then traveled to Tenney Park to try our hand at fishing. The youth learned how to put a worm on a hook, how to cast, how to get a hook stuck in a tree, and a lot of patience. We

only caught one fish the entire day! Our tour continued with a trip to the UW Arboretum, where we viewed the rain garden and prairies and learned



about different wild flowers and bugs. We couldn't get enough of the bugs at the Arboretum so when the rain was pouring down the following week, we visited the 'Blooming Butterflies' exhibit at Olbrich gardens. It was amazing to see all the different colors of butterflies on display from around the world and to see the real things in the garden. We rounded out the summer at Cherokee Marsh, youth did a bit of orienteering (using a compass) and made a visit to Henry Vilas Zoo. I think the Outdoor Club participants would agree that summer is definitely best spent outside, exploring!

## Early Childhood Program Summer Highlights

By Nicole Cummings

### Goodbye hot, summer days!

Outside our preschoolers explored by riding bikes, collecting bugs, and when the weather cooperated, running through the sprinkler on "Water Wednesdays".



We wish all the best to our friends heading off to Kinder-

garten: John Boakai, Precious Owens, Kemya Golden and Jaidao Lee. Warm wishes also to Jaxen Larson as he begins a new year at his new school. We're going to miss you!!

### Hello Fall!

Miss True and I are looking forward to meeting a few new friends this September and welcoming back our returning students. We are hoping to include more guest speakers and volunteers to enrich our fall curriculum and through out the 2009-10 school year. If your are interested in volunteering with

our preschool, there are a variety of ways to help for any length of time between 9:00am - Noon, Mon.-Fri. Please contact Nicole at Kennedy Heights : 608.244.0767 Many thanks and continuing gratitude to our volunteers and substitute staff: Kate Remington, Clare Norelle, VamMeej Yang, Lexi Larson & Jayme Vosen.



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### Note from the Executive Director

By Alyssa Kenney

#### Community Survey

Community surveys make me a little nervous. If folks take the time to provide their input, opinions and ideas it is important that the center be able to listen and respond. Sometimes, this can be really challenging. This year the center received some great information about resident concerns, community interests, and programming ideas. Let me tell you some of the ways the center is responding.

The center heard from residents that community members are concerned about having enough food in their homes. In response the center has increased efforts to provide a variety of foods during our food pantry. Volunteers are collecting food from farmers' markets, food drives, Community Action Coalition, and Second Harvest food bank. The center has been able to increase the variety of food and community residents have been accessing the pantry in record numbers. There is information about volunteering with the pantry later in the newsletter.

The center heard from residents that families would like more opportunities to have parents and children participate in activities together. In response the center hosted a family swim day at Goodman pool. Over 40 people from the neighborhood joined in the

fun, see the picture. The center hopes to continue to host more family events throughout the year.

Another resident idea from the survey was for the center to offer Hmong language classes, so residents might be able to communicate better with their neighbors. Starting in September the community center will be offering a free, basic, Hmong language class. There are more details inside the newsletter.

#### Our Website

I am a list maker. "Fix the Kennedy Heights website" has been on my to-do list for well over a year. I am very happy to report that our new and improved website is up and running. You can learn about our programs, the center's history, volunteer opportunities or how to join the Board of Directors all from our website. Please give the new site a look: [www.khcommunitycenter.org](http://www.khcommunitycenter.org)

There are still a few places under construction and a few details that need completing. The center is in need of a web savvy volunteer that might be interested in spending a few hours helping to finish our website. Please contact Alyssa at 244-0767 if you can help.

#### United for Funding

Families, non-profit agencies, businesses, and government are all feeling the squeeze of these challenging economic times. The need for Kennedy Heights Community Center's services to the community remains high while funding from many sources is shrinking. 35% of the community center's budget comes from the city of Madison. The mayor is proposing a 6% budget cut in 2010 to all city agencies including community services, which funds Kennedy Heights and 45 other agencies that help to keep our city strong and our communities safe.

In past years, every agency has advocated for their own funds and programs. But this year 40 of these agencies have joined together as "United for Funding". As a group we are asking that no cuts be made to any community service agency in the 2010 city budget. As a group we know that any funding cuts will effect our community, our clients, our agency and everyone's quality of life. I hope that the mayor and city alders work hard to keep the community services budget whole and keep Madison a great place for everyone.



## News From the Heights



### Two New AmeriCorps Members to Begin Year of Service

For the past four years Kennedy Heights Community Center has been a part of the Partners for After School Success AmeriCorps program. This school year we have two new members joining the Kennedy Heights team.

#### Sam Bergsohn

Hello! My name is Sam Bergsohn and I'm very excited to be the newest AmeriCorps staff member at the Kennedy Heights Community Center. I grew up in the state of New York, on the south shore of Long Island, which is very close to New York City. I'm a huge New York Yankee and New York Giant fan, and I love to watch and play all types of sports! This is currently my first year after college, I spent four great years at Cornell University, in

Ithaca, New York. While at Cornell, I majored in Industrial and Labor Relations, while also receiving a minor in Social Inequality. I am currently living in Madison, Wisconsin while my girlfriend attends the Veterinary School at the University of Wisconsin. In the future, I hope to attend law school, and hopefully be a politician one day, so I can have a tremendous positive impact in the world we all share.

#### Katie Jones

Hi! My name is Katie, and I'm very excited to start working at Kennedy Heights this September! I've lived in Madison my whole life and have a degree in Social Welfare from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. I've been working with youth and kids for the past year in both my volun-

teer and paid work. I volunteer at Briarpatch as a youth crisis counselor, which has really solidified my desire to work with this age group, and it has been a really great experience. As far as non-career related information goes, I have a crazy cat named Zoey, I like spending time with family and friends, and I have a love for kickball, duck-duck-goose, and anything that makes me feel like I'm in elementary school again. Things I dislike are people who are mean, poorly marked one-way streets, and sleeping through my alarm clock (I have learned to set several throughout my room in case a back up is needed). I look forward to meeting and working with all of you!



### Summer Youth Program a Great Success

By Roy LaValley

The Kennedy Heights Community Center's Summer Program was a great success! We ran for eight weeks this summer, with 33 kids coming in, and more than 15 kids a day participating on average. Our kids were able to choose from a wide range of clubs to join, ranging from art and cooking to tennis and basketball.

Highlights from this summer

included our kids going onto the course at Bridges Golf course, who generously hosted our golf club. Meanwhile Mychelyn McConley from the UW Dance program came to the center to teach break dancing to an enthusiastic crew of kids. On another day the art club produced amazing art projects while the cooking club made delicious egg rolls. Michael Hongmanivanh, now starting his sophomore year at East

High School, volunteered to help make the program a success.

Our kids started asking about this summer's program in January. I have no doubt when it's 20 below this winter one of the program participants from the summer will ask, "What clubs are we going to have this summer?"



## News From the Heights



### A Fund For Women and United Way Support Economic Program

The Kennedy Heights Community Center is pleased to announce that A Fund for Women has selected our Economic Pathways program for funding in 2010. The Economic Pathways program will be a part of our Girls Inc. program in 2010. The program will provide girls and their mothers access to high quality financial literacy curriculums “Dollars, Sense and Me” and “Equal Earners—Savvy Spenders”

Current Girls Inc. participants along with their mothers will participate in the 8 week financial literacy programs. At the end of the program girls will have investigated the education, skills and other requirements to pursue the careers that interest them most; girls and their mothers will learn about budgeting money for wants and needs and how to use smart shopping techniques when making purchases; participants will learn how checking and saving accounts work, perceive banks as a

safe place to deposit money and understand compounding interest.

These financial education curriculums are part of the national Girls Inc programming and have been piloted, tested and evaluated thoroughly at sites similar to Kennedy Heights. We are confident that families will find the programming enjoyable and informative.

As an added incentive for mothers and daughters to complete the full program, all mother daughter pairs that complete the curriculum will be eligible to participate in a build your own computer program. With technical support from DANenet mothers-daughter teams will build their own computers that they are then able to take home and use as a family computer. Participants will gain financial and technical skills through participating in the Economic Pathways program.

To kick-off this new program the United Way Foundation has provided support for a special Economic Pathways kick-off event during Money Smart Week.

Money Smart Week is a public awareness initiative October 10—17th. It aims to build your financial knowledge so you can deal with your own money more quickly, confidently and shrewdly. Presenters offer unbiased financial education. The Economic Pathways program will host an informational session as part of money smart week on Tuesday, October 13th from 5:30—7 at the community center. If you would like to learn more about the program please plan to come to this educational session. Snacks and childcare will be provided. Please call Lisa DuChateau at 244-0767 to sign up.

### Meals on Wheels Seeks Volunteers

Do you have room in your heart and room in your car? Home Health United Meals on Wheels delivers the noon meal every day to the elderly and homebound in Madison, Monona and Middleton and we are always in

need of new volunteers. A route takes about an hour with very specific instructions to each recipient's home. We have four pickup points in Madison and will adapt to any schedule you may have. This is a great family

activity and can also be used as community service hours for individuals, scout groups or service groups. Contact Sue Barker at 276-7598 for more information

## News From the Heights



### These Kids Are Flipping Out



Middle school students from the summer program's break dancing club show off their skills during a dance off.

### After School Program Gears Up for a New Year

By: True Vang

The Kennedy Heights Community Center After School Program started on Thursday September 3rd. I am very happy that we will be having Lexi Larson return as a lead teacher again this year. Lexi has many new ideas and plans for the school year. She already knows many of the kids and their parents. We also have a new teacher Dionna Stovall starting in the After School Program as an assistant teacher.

I am very excited about this year, as we will be having many children returning and a number of new faces joining the program this year. The After School Program will

continue to offer science club and knitting group each week. Cathy, our science volunteer, makes science fun and exciting for all the kids. Barb is our knitting teacher, she comes once a week. The kids have knit mittens, hats, purses, slippers and many other projects. The children have learned a lot from these volunteers and the children look forward to them coming each week.

We have exciting activities planned for the younger children also. We plan to be bug hunters and dinosaur scientists this fall. The children's interests will lead the program plan.

This fall, like past years the

After School program will host a Family Literacy Night again. For families new to the community, Literacy Night is a fun, family event. The community center host carnival type games that support reading and neighbors come together to share a meal and some youth performances. Fliers will be distributed in the community once a date is selected.

The After School Program is for elementary school age children in Kindergarten—5th grade. Children in Kindergarten—third grade MUST complete an enrollment packet before the first day of attendance. Packets can be picked up at the center. Call True at 244-0767 for additional information.

## Staff

Alyssa Kenney, Executive Director  
 Jim Kidd, Custodian  
 Nicole Cummings, Early Childhood Program Lead Teacher / Director  
 True Vang, After School Coordinator, Early Childhood Assistant Teacher  
 Tyson Brown, Food Service  
 Lexi Larson, After School Teacher  
 Dionna Stovall, After School Teacher  
 VamMeej Yang, Asian Outreach Coordinator  
 Lisa DuChateau, Girls Inc. Coordinator  
 Roy LaValley, Youth Program Coordinator  
 Lo Chang, Technology Coordinator  
 Sam Bergsohn, AmeriCorps Member  
 Katie Jones, AmeriCorps Member

## Board of Directors

John Givens, Chair  
 Kiesha Young, Treasurer  
 Allison Plummer, Secretary  
 Lynne Solomon  
 Lacey Vosen  
 LaDonna McReynolds  
 Jody Schmitz  
 Mary Hyde

## Thank You

Madison Chiropractic—North  
 Isthmus Handyman  
 Kathy Walsh  
 Rewey Family  
 Anne Pryor and Steve Ackerman  
 Wally Meyer  
 Barb James  
 Alyssa Kenney  
 Thomas Doherty

## News From the Heights



### Hmong Language Class

By VamMeej Yang

The Kennedy Heights Community Center will be hosting a Hmong language class this fall. The class will begin on Thursday September 17th and meet every Thursday for eight weeks. The class will be from 12:00—1:30 PM and students are welcome to bring a brown bag lunch. Students will learn basic Hmong pronunciation, reading and writing. This class is being sponsored by Madison Gas and Electric. Shoua Vang is going to teach the class. Shoua is a recent graduate of University of Wisconsin Madison. He now works at the Community Action Coalition gardens to help Hmong gardeners who need translation and interpreting. Our Hmong language class welcomes you to come and join us. Any community members, staff and volunteers who want to learn Hmong are welcome. The class is free, space is limited and registration is strongly encouraged. Please contact VamMeej at 244-0767 with questions or to sign up.



### Hmong Language Class

By VamMeej Yang

Peb yuav muaj kawm ntawv Hmoob nyob rau ntawm Kennedy Heights Community Center. Chav kawm ntawv Hmoob yuav pib hnub Thursday, Cuj hlis 17 thaum 12—1:30 PM (txhua txhua hnub Thursday). Peb yuav kawm txog cov suab, nyeem ntawv los sis sau ntawv. Yuab siv kawm txog li 8 as thiv.

Ua tsaug rau Ntxhuav Vaj uas nws yuav tuaj qhia ntawv Hmoob. Ntxhuav Vaj yog ib tug tub kawm ntawv tiav nyob rau hauv UW 2008. Ziaj no nws ua hauj lwm nyob rau hauv CAC garden uas nws pab cov hmoob ua vaj zuab uas xav tau kev txhais ntawv thiab txhais lus. Chav kawm ntawv hmoob no tos txais nej tuaj koom thiab kawm nrog peb. Txhua tus tub ntxhais ua hauj lwm thiab cov neeg uas ua hauj lwm nrog hmoob, es xav kawm ntawv hmoob los peb tos txais tuaj kawm nrog peb. Yog muaj lus nug hu Vaam-Meej Yang @ 244-0767.

### Thinking of Returning to School?

By Michelle Dolbeau

In today's uncertain economy, many professionals in Wisconsin have realized that higher education is crucial, not only for those looking to start a new career, but also to increase their skills and value in the workplace. Obtaining a degree while juggling so many responsibilities - whether it is raising a family or working more than one job - can be a daunting task. The question for these determined individuals immediately becomes, "How do I do it?"

Many local adults have found

their answer at University of Phoenix Madison campus. The university offers online and in-person ground classes, as well as expert guidance from full-time enrollment counselors who can help decide what program is the best fit and map out the best path on the road to success. The flexible schedule offered, including evening and online classes, makes it possible for busy adults to earn their degrees regardless of their hectic responsibilities or where they live.

University of Phoenix Madison campus has a learning

environment that is made to present real-world applications. The outstanding faculty members who work at the campus are working professionals who are leaders in their industries. Further, the Madison campus holds itself to the highest academic standards and is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools offering a variety of associate and bachelor degree programs.

This year the University of Phoenix awarded over 300 degrees to graduates across

Wisconsin. . Whether these graduates use their degree to pursue an alternate field of work, or their newfound credentials provide them with more job security, their achievements will have a direct impact on their families and the entire Wisconsin community.

For more information visit [www.phoenix.edu/corp/mrdolbea](http://www.phoenix.edu/corp/mrdolbea) or contact Madison campus Corporate Education Liaison, Michelle Dolbeau at 608.240.3631 or [michelle.dolbeau@phoenix.edu](mailto:michelle.dolbeau@phoenix.edu).

## News From the Heights



### Fall Computer Classes

By Lo Chang

Hello everyone, I would like to let everyone knows that we are going to begin a new computer classes again this fall. These computer classes will be taught on every Tuesday at 5:30 PM starting September 15th right here at the Center. These classes are free and everyone is welcome. We will continue to learn how to operate a computer, typing, using the Internet, working with Microsoft Office applications, and how to work with digital media. I would like to encourage everyone to come and learn some new skills. If you have any questions, please call Lo Chang or Alyssa Kenney at 244-0767.

By Lo Chang

Nyob zoo sawv daws, kuv xav qhia rau txhua tus paub tias peb yuav pib qhia computer dua rau thaum lub caij nplooj ntoos zeeg no. Cov hoob computer no yuav qhia txhua hnuv Tuesday thaum 5:30 PM pib lub 9 hli ntuj vas thib 15 nyob rau ntawm Center no. Cov hoob no yog kawm dawb xwb. Peb tos txais txhua tus tuaj. Nyob ntawm cov hoob no peb yuav kawm txog kom paub siv computer, xyaum ntaus ntawv, siv Internet, siv Microsoft Office cov khoom, thiab muab duab thiab nkauj rau hauv computer. Kuv xav caw sawv daws tuaj thiab kawm kom paub txog computer. Yog nej muaj lus nug no thov hu rau Laub Tsab los sis Alyssa Kenney ntawm 242-0767.

### Kennedy Heights Community Center Food Pantry

Starting Monday September 14th the Kennedy Heights food pantry will resume hosting the pantry every week. The pantry is open from 5:00—6:00 PM on Monday evenings. Due to the large increase in pantry visitors we

will be re-stating the color system in October to help ensure fair distribution of food. As a reminder please do not arrive at the pantry early. The food pantry is always seeking community volun-

teers to help with stocking, organizing and distributing food. Pantry volunteers also get first choice of food on days when they volunteer. Call Alyssa at 244-0767 to sign up.

### CROP Hunger Walk Supports Our Food Pantry

By: Madison Area CROP Hunger Walk Committee

In 2008 the Madison Area CROP Hunger Walk event raised \$75,59272 to support area hunger prevention. The Kennedy Heights food pantry received a \$315.31 to our Second Harvest account.

Each year, some 1800 communities across the United States reach out in partner-

ship to poor and hungry people here in the United States and in more than 80 countries around the world. And they take advantage of an option unique to CROP WALKS—they elect to share up to 25% of what they raise with effective local hunger-fighting agencies like Kennedy Heights.

The hunger Walk event committee would like to encour-

age all those working with Kennedy Heights to support the CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday October 18th, 2009 by walking or rocking or sponsoring someone who is participating. Together we can help poor and hungry people locally and around the world. For more information about how to get involved with the CROP Walk contact Nicole Lawless at 222-7008 or go to [www.cropwalk.org](http://www.cropwalk.org).

## Wish List

Digital camera  
Paper towel rolls  
Big rolls of paper  
Quality children's books  
Occupational dress-up clothes  
10—60 piece puzzles  
Winter gloves / hats / mittens  
Non-perishable food items  
Hand soap  
Dish soap  
Volleyballs  
Soccer balls  
Four square balls  
Pencils w/ erasers  
Calculators  
Letter size manila folders  
School Supplies  
Snow Boots  
Size ten envelopes  
Color printing services  
6 conference room chairs  
Packages of new children's underwear and socks

## Newsletter

**Editor:** Alyssa Kenney  
**Contributing Writers:**  
Lo Chang, VamMeej Yang, True Vang, Nicole Cummings, Alyssa Kenney, Lisa DuChateau, Roy LaValley, Michelle Dolbeau, Sam Bergsohn, Katie Jones

## Kennedy Heights Neighborhood Association

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E-mail: kennedyheightscommunitycenter@yahoo.com

Www.khcommunitycenter.org



United Way  
of Dane County



## Upcoming Important Dates

### Food Pantry

September 14th, 21st and 28th

### ***COLOR SYSTEM STARTS OCTOBER 5th***

October 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th

November 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 30th

December 7th and 14th

### Warner Park Recreation Center 10 year Celebration

September 13th—19th events all week

### Thanksgiving Basket Sign-up

September 21st—October 17th

### Thanksgiving Basket Distribution

Monday November 23rd

### Board of Directors Meetings: All residents are welcome

September 16th 5:30—7

October 21st 5:30—7 Annual Meeting

November 18th 5:30—7

December 16th—as needed

### 2009 Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable

Saturday November 7th 8 AM—noon

## United Way Days of Caring

On Tuesday August 25th Kennedy Heights Community Center staff joined with over 2800 other community members to be part of United Way of Dane County's Days of Caring. In past years the community center has hosted projects but this year our staff wanted to participate in a volunteer project.

Kennedy Heights staff joined with 40 other local volunteers to help at the Madison Area Food Pantry Community Gardens on the far west side. We harvested vegetables for area food pantries and weeded a large patch of squash and peppers. Following our volunteer work we attended a huge community lunch with hundreds and hundreds of other volunteers. At the lunch United Way announced their annual fundraising goal of \$16,600,000.

It was fun for our staff to learn about another non-profit group in Dane County and to help them with their work for a morning. A big thank you to our gracious and knowledgeable hosts at the garden.