



# CHILDNET NEWS

## *Helping Vulnerable Children & Families*

### CELEBRATING 45 YEARS SERVING THE YOUTH OF LONG BEACH

On September 27th, ChildNet Youth & Family Services, Inc. held its Second Annual Celebration. This event commemorated its 45th Anniversary with a Swinging '40s theme which also commemorated the 70th Anniversary of the end of WWII in 1945! The event honored three prominent Long Beach contemporary veterans - Terry Geiling, President & CEO of Gold Star Manor; L.A. County Supervisor Don Knabe and Braden Phillips, Administration Bureau Chief of the Long Beach Police Department. State Assemblyman Patrick O'Donnell paid homage to each honoree and presented them with an award and thanked them for their service. We were pleased that Nick Ippolito could join us on behalf of Supervisor Knabe.

The event was held on the grounds of ChildNet's Administration building located at 4155 Outer Traffic Circle Drive. Upwards of 200 people attended and more than \$20,000 net was raised. 100% of the proceeds support ChildNet's foster care program, Foster Family Network.

There was something for everyone: Gary Tole's Legends of Swing 16-piece orchestra, classic car show, face painting, a magic show and balloon animals for kids; and, the In-N-Out Burger Truck; Local 372 Firefighters' famous barbequed hot dogs, and the King Kone Truck with a variety of ice cream favorites.

Major sponsors included Der Manouel Insurance Group; R.H. Mason Insurance Services; Cushman & Wakefield; Hays



Top: (L to R) Nick Ippolito accepting for Don Knabe; Braden Phillips; Terry Geiling



Left: Celebration site on the grounds of ChildNet's administration building



Top: In-N-Out Food Truck;



Left: King Kone Food Truck



*Continued on page 6*



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/ CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

by Kathy Hughes, President/CEO

Our ChildNet organization has certainly had a great deal to be thankful for this year! We were thrilled to celebrate our 45th Anniversary providing safe homes, education and counseling to vulnerable children and families. THANK YOU to all of our generous supporters who made our "Swinging '40s Celebration" such a big success! We are excited to report that all of the net proceeds will be used to recruit and retain much-needed foster parents. This year we consolidated two of our Inland Empire Foster Family Network (FFN) office locations into one beautiful new facility in Riverside (see ribbon-cutting news on page 3). We are also planning another ribbon-cutting ceremony for our new FFN location in Bakersfield. We have recently launched our holiday campaign, which provides holiday gifts for needy children and families throughout all of our ChildNet programs, and we appreciate your support!

I am especially grateful for the dedication and passion our employees demonstrate while working with the children we serve. Thanks to their daily efforts, we touched the lives of more than 8,000 individuals this year!

The Long Beach Business Journal featured an article (September issue) written by ChildNet's Director of Behavioral Health Services (BHS), Dr. Francine Togneri. The subject matter addressed the impact chronic exposure to early childhood trauma and severe neglect has on adult societal problems, such as homelessness. The encouraging news is that timely mental health treatment, like the interventions provided by ChildNet's BHS program, can serve to decrease such destructive consequences caused by early childhood experiences. There is no doubt that our highly professional, caring and extraordinary ChildNet staff members are indeed making a difference!

In June, our hard-working Zinsmeyer Academy graduates were treated to a wonderful, highly successful keynote speaker who encouraged, inspired and promised to make himself available to students who needed further assistance - very impressive (please see page 3 for details). We are so proud of all of our graduates!

We are also pleased to report that ChildNet obtained accreditation by the Joint Commission! The application process was a very long and arduous effort, spearheaded by ChildNet's Quality Assurance Director, Cherrie Gibbs and supported by several staff members (see page 7). ChildNet passed with flying colors!

We will soon be saying farewell to 2015, and turning our attention to the goals we have set for 2016. Our mission will continue to inspire us, leading us forward as we strive to serve an ever-increasing number of vulnerable children who desperately need our help. THANK YOU for supporting our efforts.

From our ChildNet family to yours, we wish you a very happy, safe and joyous holiday season!



Kathy Hughes, President/CEO

## PASS IT ON

Many people, who are introduced to ChildNet for the first time, are surprised to learn that we have been serving youth in Long Beach for 45 years and counting. In the not-too-distant past, we kept hearing "You're the best-kept secret in Long Beach!" While that has changed to some degree, we haven't quite reached everyone in town. But with your help, we can make great strides in doing so! By passing along this and future ChildNet newsletters, you can help us reach many new people. And think about it, you will be helping the planet by creatively recycling the publications every time you receive one!

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER EXTRAORDINAIRE WOWS ZINSMAYER GRADUATES



Walter Larkins

Walter Larkins is an inventor, serial entrepreneur, and passionate advocate. His various companies have created devices for minimally invasive heart surgery, developed email encryption systems, helped hospitals stay in business by managing their receivables and provided insurance solutions to businesses and individuals. He lives by the motto “to have tried and failed is far better than dying with a lot of woulda-coulda-shouldas.” And the 2015 Zinsmeyer graduates as well as other student guests, responded well to his zest for life – and he responded well to their curiosity.

“I was moved and motivated by the students and staff. The commitment to motivate students to replace pessimism with optimism and perceived disabilities with limitless possibilities was inspiring. The staff’s success was demonstrated by the graduates’ expressions of hope in their words and in their faces as they accepted their diplomas,” Larkins said.

In addition to being a much sought-after motivational speaker Larkins also provides training on how to “Manage Your Predictable Behavior to Achieve More Predictable and Positive Results.” He is an Army Veteran, attended Boston University’s European Division MBA program, the US Military Academy at West Point, and is a graduate of UCLA where he was an ROTC scholarship winner. He serves on a number of non-profit boards and organizations including Job Corps, is a Commissioner on the Long Beach Economic Development Commission, Long Beach Rotary and his own nonprofit the E=O2™ Foundation as its executive director.



(L to R): Kelly Loven, former vice-principal; Kevin Quinn, teacher; Ana Barraza, principal; Walter Larkins congratulating student.

After Larkins finished his address and the graduation ceremony had concluded, the students and some of their family members stayed behind, thanked him for coming and expressed an interest in learning more about him. He graciously spent extra time with them, answering questions and encouraging them to stay in school so they will be prepared to follow their dreams. Larkins was impressed with their enthusiasm and even offered to mentor them, demonstrating a genuine interest in the youth.

Walter Larkins wowed staff and teachers, too.  
*Thank you for your time with our kids,  
 Walter. It was a special day!*



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**If you have made a donation to ChildNet between January 1, 2015 and November 30, 2015 and are either not included on these lists and/or did not receive an acknowledgement, please call or email Eileen Factor at 562-498-5252, [efactor@childnet.net](mailto:efactor@childnet.net).**

## MATCHING MEAN\$ MORE

Did you know that your gift to ChildNet could be doubled or even tripled? Many companies have matching gift programs in which they match dollar for dollar your gift to your favorite charity. And in some instances, companies match two to one.

Check with the human resources department of your company to see if you have such a program. It's a great way to make your gift count even more!

# FOSTER FAMILY NETWORK OPENS ITS DOORS IN THE INLAND EMPIRE

Foster Family Network (FFN) announced the opening of its newest satellite office in Riverside at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on the grounds of the new site.

Two former Inland Empire FFN offices joined forces and relocated from San Bernardino and Moreno Valley to the Historic District of Riverside earlier this year. On April 16, a ribbon-cutting was held to introduce the community to Foster Family Network and all the wonderful services it provides to the children referred to it by local county placing agencies. The event was organized by the Riverside Chambers of Commerce.

“We were thrilled to open our new offices in beautiful downtown Riverside,” said Kathy Hughes, President & CEO of ChildNet Youth and Family Services. “Combining the two sites has enabled us to centralize all of our Inland Empire services to meet the needs of vulnerable children who desperately need a stable home environment.”

As background, FFN recruits and trains all types of families – single parents, married and same-sex couples and retirees who can meet all certification requirements set forth by the State of California, and are willing to provide a warm, stable, nurturing environment for children. Under the excellent leadership of Amanda Sage, Inland Empire Regional Director, the FFN’s social-work staff provides ongoing training and 24/7 support for the foster families.

Recognizing the need to address the increasing demand for quality foster homes, ChildNet established its Foster Family Network program in 1986. Many of the children referred to it for placement are victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and/or abandonment and come to it with significant behavioral and emotional challenges.



(L to R) Holding ribbon Karen Foley, Fox Performing Arts Center Live Nation; Lashe Rodriguez, representing CA Assemblyman Jose Medina; Mike Gardiner, Riverside City Councilman; Amanda Sage, Inland Empire Regional Director Foster Family Network ; Lou Cassani, ChildNet Board Chair; Matt Friedlander, Inland Empire United Way.



(L to R) Mike Gardiner, Riverside City Councilman; Kathy Hughes, ChildNet President/CEO; Lou Cassani, ChildNet Board Chair.



The Inland Empire office serves children in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Our Long Beach office serves Los Angeles and Orange counties. Our Kern County office serves the Greater Bakersfield area. FFN is licensed by the State of California, Community Care Licensing Division.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a foster parent, please call 562-492-9527 (Orange & L.A. counties); 951-247-6064 (Inland Empire); 661-633-1700 (Kern County).



Continued from page 1

Companies; St. Mary Medical Foundation; and Marlene Temple representing the Don Temple Family Foundation.

“This was a wonderful celebration of our 45 years serving vulnerable youth in Long Beach,” said Kathy Hughes, President/CEO. “It was especially fun to have a 16-piece orchestra play favorites from the 40s. A good time was definitely had by all!”

The In-N-Out Burger truck and the LB Firefighters’ famous hot dogs were big hits – and everyone enjoyed the King Kone Truck which offered a variety of ice cream treats throughout the event.

Geebo the Clown was a real crowd pleaser for young and old alike with his balloon animals made to order and his magic show which stumped even the seasoned onlooker.



Above: Army National Guard Unit Volunteers, the 140th Chemical Company. (L to R): SGT Lara, SGT Ngo, SGT Hernandez, SGT Enomoto, SGT Turvey, and SGT Crew.



Right: ChildNet’s Outreach Specialist Maria Aguirre with sister Mia.

# SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF

## EASBA'S NEW TREASURER

ChildNet is proud to introduce East Anaheim Street Business Alliance's (EASBA) new treasurer, Brett Lewis. Brett is ChildNet's Director of Community Outreach.

EASBA is a multi-faced economic, business and community development organization facilitating the exchange of business information. It also encourages cooperation between all businesses along the East Anaheim Street corridor of Long Beach. This is just one of Brett's volunteer projects.

Brett learned of the importance of service at a young age when he was introduced to scouting in elementary school. In high school, he was a police explorer for the City of Westminster. In college, while working on his undergraduate degree at CSULB, he spent time on weekends as a volunteer mentor at the Youth Guidance Center in Santa Ana, helping children within the Orange County juvenile justice system. During his senior year in college, he volunteered for an internship at Beach Haven Lodge in Long Beach. He worked daily at the adult residential re-entry program for offenders that were soon to be released from prison.

When working with disadvantaged youth and adults, Brett realized that a life of service was where he fit. He joined ChildNet Youth and Family Services in 1999 providing direct care for children at the Long Beach Youth Home (a former division of ChildNet). The youth home provided treatment to children referred by the Department of Probation, the Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Children and Family Services. When his schedule would allow, he worked for the Westminster Unified School District as a substitute teacher for their elementary and middle schools.

In addition to his participation in EASBA, he currently volunteers with the East Long Beach Pony Baseball League and Long Beach Youth Soccer Organization. He is also the Chair of the Community Partnership Council at the Department of Children and Family Services, and a member of the Long Beach Human Trafficking Task Force. He recently became a member of the Rotary Club of Long Beach where he jumped in with both feet as a volunteer in several areas of service.

Congratulations Brett, we are so happy you found something productive to do in your spare time!



Brett Lewis

## JOINT COMMISSION ACCREDITATION

by Cherri Gibbs



ChildNet was honored to receive national accreditation status with The Joint Commission (TJC) this year. Since ChildNet continuously strives to provide the highest possible quality of client services, we believe voluntary accreditation greatly contributes to our established safety goals, provision of secure environments for clients and staff members and in achieving positive therapeutic outcomes for children and their families. We are extremely proud to have achieved this prestigious status with such a premier national accrediting agency!

After conducting extensive research and vetting various accrediting bodies, we determined that the high standards associated with TJC would be the best fit for ChildNet. These standards were applied to every aspect of our agency. We revised numerous policies and procedures, improved office space where needed and provided extensive employee training in areas designed to improve performance, safety and client outcomes. During our accreditation review, we were pleased to hear the TJC surveyors say that they would "not hesitate to refer their family members and friends to ChildNet for services." A higher compliment could not be paid.

The accreditation process was arduous and time consuming, but was one of the most sterling examples of our legendary ChildNet teamwork. The collaboration, camaraderie and sense of accomplishment generated by the process will be celebrated for years to come. Congratulations to the entire ChildNet team for "raising the bar" and achieving TJC accreditation!



Cherri Gibbs



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Visit our website at [www.childnet.net](http://www.childnet.net) to keep up-to-date on the happenings at ChildNet!

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