



- 04 SOAR
Certifications
- 05 Hope Haven
Women's Shelter
Update
- 06 Youth Corps
- 08 In The Community



THE COMMUNITY

Summer
2024

Quarterly Community Newsletter
Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. and Chautauqua Opportunities for Development, Inc.

Head Start and Early Head Start Families Celebrate at End of School Year

Children throughout the county recently celebrated the end of the 2023-2024 school year, and toddlers and preschoolers in COI's Head Start and Early Head Start programs were no exception! Festivities were held at each of the agency's childcare centers to congratulate those who graduated from the program. A total of 82 four-year-olds donned caps and gowns and were deemed ready for the transition to kindergarten in September. Families who were in attendance enjoyed a pizza party and participated in fun activities that included face painting, rock painting, bead bracelets, water play and plenty of bubbles. Zoomas Photography by Allison captured photos of the graduates at Holy Family Center in Jamestown, the largest of the agency's six childcare centers.

Other end-of-year activities included a Fire and Summer Safety Event at Connections North. The event was a huge hit with home-based and center-based children, who learned the types of vehicles that community helpers use to do their jobs. Children were able to climb into the fire truck and pretend to be fire fighters. They were also able to explore the inside of an ambulance. The big hit of the *(continued on page 2)*



Photo courtesy of Zoomas Photography by Allison.

Dunkirk (716) 366-8176
10825 Bennett Rd. Dunkirk, NY

Jamestown (716) 661-9430
402 Chandler St Jamestown, NY

Youth Safe House 1(888) 877-9647

Head Start and Early Head Start Families Celebrate at End of School Year



Family Engagement Specialist Melanie Wielgasz helping out during the Fire and Summer Safety Event

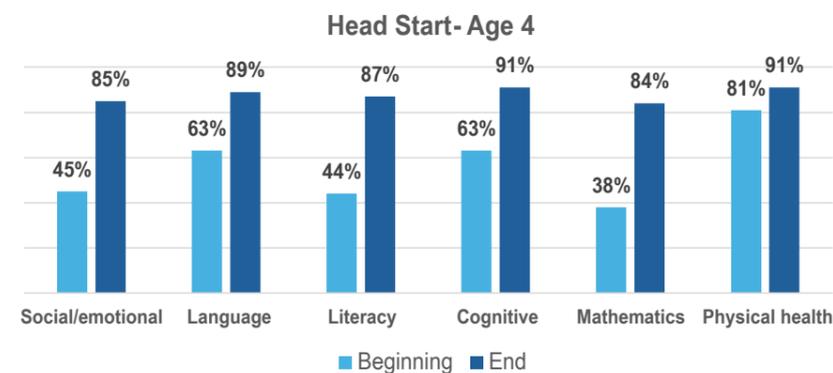
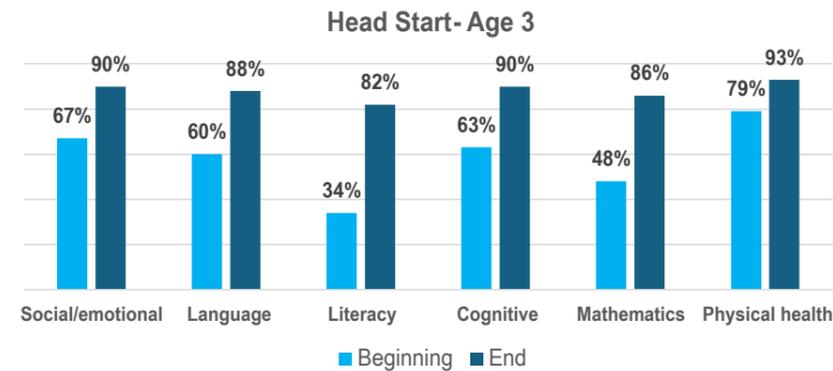
(continued from page 1) night was seeing the lights and hearing the sirens! A giant shout out to East Town of Dunkirk for making this event a great success!

Families and children tried to stay cool with a trip to the Splash Pad in Dunkirk during the recent heat wave, where they also learned about water and sun safety. Children enrolled at the Dunkirk School #3 site enjoyed a Field Day to wrap up the school year that included two bounce houses, chalk drawings, bike riding,



relay races, snow cones, and cotton candy. Home-based families in the southern end of the county came together to enjoy the outdoors and plant various types of flowers. Children were able to get their hands dirty and follow directions while planting their choice of flower. Families and children also enjoyed playing on the playground together.

Head Start helps 3- and 4- year olds learn the skills necessary for later success in school and in life. Family engagement is a critical component to the process, as parents are their child's primary teacher. The areas of social/emotional development, language skills, literacy, cognitive, mathematics, and physical health are assessed three times during the year to measure each child's progress. The following charts illustrate the percentage of 3- and 4- year olds who met or exceeded age-appropriate milestones in each area at the beginning of the program year compared to the end of the year. (continued on page 4)



DO YOU NEED HELP FINDING CHILD CARE?

The Chautauqua Child Care Council provides services for those seeking quality child care and offers access to a comprehensive network of care options.

FREE REFERRALS

The Chautauqua Child Care Council will give you FREE referrals to registered and licensed child care providers and walk you through a FREE Child Care Plan.

Call 1 (800) 424-4532 today!

THE CHILD CARE PLAN

- Information on Quality Child Care.
- An individualized budget.
- Information about the cost of care.
- Importance of backup care.
- Guidance for making informed child care decisions.

HELP WITH PAYING FOR CARE

Individuals and families may be eligible for low or no cost **Child Care Assistance**. To find out if you qualify, call (716) 753-4192 to apply for Child Care Assistance Program.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE ELIGIBILITY

Did you know that if you qualify for **Child Care Assistance**, that a friend, family member, or neighbor could get paid to provide care in the child's home or the provider's home? Call (716) 661-9430 for more information.

Family Size	Annual Income
2	\$73,869
3	\$91,250
4	\$108,631
5	\$126,012
6	\$143,393

Head Start and Early Head Start Families Celebrate at End of School Year

(continued from page 2) Early Head Start serves infants and toddlers under the age of 3, and pregnant women. Services are similar to preschool Head Start programs, but are tailored for the needs of infants and toddlers. The physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of infants and toddlers is promoted in Early Head Start to prepare them for healthy growth and development that will lead to success later in school and in life.

COI also offers Home-based Head Start and Early Head Start services that are provided in the home environment, as well as opportunities for socialization with other children and families.

To enroll in Head Start or Early Head Start, call (716) 366-8176.

More pictures from the events can be found on pages 10 and 11.



Hope Haven Women's Shelter Scheduled to Open Later This Year



The picture above shows work in progress on the 2nd floor.

Demolition and rehabilitation work began in March 2024 to convert a building in Jamestown into an emergency shelter for homeless women. The project is now nearing completion, with a grand opening being planned for Fall. The three-story building at 303 Lafayette Street had previously contained a laundromat on the first floor and apartments on the upper floors. The completed emergency shelter will have 12 one-bedroom fully furnished units. Units on the second floor will be fully adaptable and

provide room for one person per unit. Bedrooms on the third floor will be slightly larger and will accommodate up to 2 persons each. The first floor will consist of common areas and space for onsite staff. The finished shelter will have the capacity to house up to 18 adult women at a time and will be staffed 24/7.

The project will address the lack of emergency shelter options for the homeless, who are currently placed in hotels and motels at high cost and with no supportive services. Local housing providers have recognized the need for an emergency shelter that serves women for several years. The current shelters that are available serve specialized populations such as runaway and homeless youth, domestic violence victims, and

single men. This situation has created a long-held gap for placement of homeless individuals who do not meet the eligibility requirements for these shelters. The project will provide a place to shelter homeless women who would otherwise be living in places not meant for habitation, such as on the street or in abandoned buildings.



One of the 3rd floor bathrooms is shown during rehabilitation.

The building is centrally located in the downtown area of the City of Jamestown, within walking distance of most services that the target population would need, including the Department of Social Services and Chautauqua Works. Case management and supportive services will be provided to residents to address the causes of homelessness and assist them with acquiring and maintaining permanent housing.

Success Stories

Congratulations Alexandria and Julia!

COI Housing Support Specialists Alexandria Waller and Julia Rivera recently completed certification training in SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery). SOAR is a program designed to help those who are homeless and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder complete an application for SSI or SSD.

The application process for SSI/SSDI is complicated, particularly for those with mental illness or substance use issues who are also homeless. Alexandria and Julia learned how to complete and submit high-quality SSI/SSDI applications, so they are better equipped to help this population receive SSI/SSD benefits. This provides a stable source of income so that individuals are better able to obtain safe and secure housing, which is often the first step toward recovery. Completion of the SOAR course takes about 20 hours of online training and includes submission of a Practice Case Application Packet.



Youth Corps Members participate in Community Events

COI's Youth Corps completed two community park clean ups earlier this summer. In June, 7 Youth Corps members, accompanied by Safe House staff, cleaned McCrea Point Park in Jamestown. In July, 5 Youth Corps members and staff cleaned Point Gratiot Park in Dunkirk. The team at Point Gratiot were joined by Health and Family Services Director, Chris Nicosia and his Administrative Assistant, Kaitlyn Newman. After the clean ups, the youth were provided with a picnic lunch. By participating in events such as park cleanups, youth develop a sense of responsibility for their community. They build stronger connections between each



Youth Corps is open to young people ages 14-22 who are interested in community service activities and volunteer opportunities. Call COI's Safe House at (716) 661-6446 for more information.

other and work towards creating a healthier environment for everyone. Youth Corps plans regular events to help serve the community and provide opportunities for youth to become strong leaders. Any youth between the ages of 14-22 are welcome to join. For more information on the Youth Corps and how you can become involved, please call (716) 661-9446.

CHAUTAUQUA OPPORTUNITIES, INC.
HELPING PEOPLE...CHANGING LIVES...

Dads

Dads Always Determined to Succeed

*The production of this direct type set was supported by Grant (902-0034-01-00) from ACT. Its content are solely the responsibility of Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. and do not necessarily represent the official views of ACT.

CAR SHOW

SPECIAL REMOTE BROADCAST BY KIX COUNTRY! 96.5 FM

FREE ADMISSION! FOOD! PRIZES! MUSIC!

CAR AWARDS!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17TH, 2024
CONNECTIONS NORTH PARKING LOT
10825 BENNETT ROAD, DUNKIRK
12PM-3PM

HOSTED BY THE CHAUTAUQUA OPPORTUNITIES, INC. FATHERHOOD PROGRAM



Fatherhood Program Sponsors Music on the Pier

Music can be heard for miles around on Thursday nights in the City of Dunkirk from their Music on the Pier concert series. COI's 24/7 Dad Fatherhood Program was the sponsor for the June 27 event, which featured music from local band Ion Sky and headliner XOXO Pop Band. Staff of COI's Fatherhood and Head Start Programs were on hand to distribute promotional items and explain their programs to all who stopped by their tent. The event provided a great opportunity to share information and enroll a few fathers and father figures in upcoming 24/7 Dad classes. Dads who are interested in sharpening their parenting skills in a supportive environment with other fathers are encouraged to call (716) 366-8176 or (716) 661-9430.



Back Row: Robert Smith, Kathy Kelly, Keith Callen, Aaron Smith
Front Row: Kaitlyn Newman, Dorianne Giles, Christopher Nicosia, Lori Gould

In the Community

Health and Wellness Fairs

Outreach Specialists from our COI's Head Start, Child Care Council and Fatherhood programs joined other local agencies at Health and Wellness Fairs in Dunkirk and Jamestown that were hosted by the Chautauqua Connections Children's Coalition. Children and families who attended participated in activities and games, and were able to gather information on local services.



Pictured: Mikala Farren



Pictured: Cheryl Derby, Lindsey Burke, Robert Smith

Fatherhood Program sponsors Tarp Skunks Baseball Game



Pictured: Eloy Bautista, Keith Callen, Lori Gould, Dorianne Giles, Aaron Smith, Robert Smith

Russell E. Diethrick, Jr. Park was the setting on Tuesday night July 9 for a fun-filled baseball game, as the Jamestown Tarp Skunks faced off against the Niagara Falls Americans. Fans were admitted to the game for just \$2, except for the more than 150 recipients of free tickets distributed by COI's Fatherhood Program. Staff of the Fatherhood Program were on hand to promote the program by providing information and giveaway items, such as a baseball stress ball adorned with the DADS logo that several of the children had autographed by the players. Fathers and father figures could also sign up for COI's program, which includes parenting workshops, peer support, and planned opportunities such as this for fathers to spend positive time engaging with their children. The game was an exciting evening for children and adults alike, despite a 5-1 loss for the Tarp Skunks.

Head Start End of the Year Festivities



Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc

Diane Hewitt-Johnson, CEO

Housing and Community Development

Josiah Lamp, Director

- Foreclosure Prevention
- Homebuyer Education
- Homeless Prevention & Rehousing
- Housing Rehabilitation
- Lead Hazard Control
- Tenant Services
- Weatherization

Early Care and Education

Bill Vogt, Director

- Early Head Start
- Head Start
- Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships
- Universal Pre-K

Child Care Council

Susan Marker, Director

- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Legally Exempt
- Training
- Family Court Child Care
- USDA Summer Food Services Program

Health and Family Services

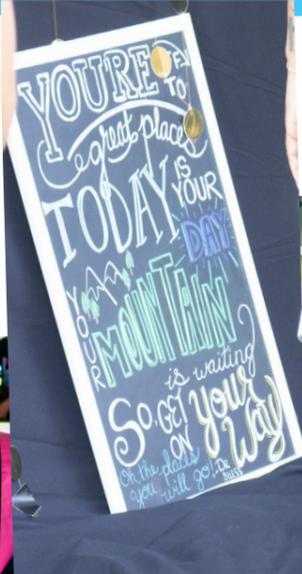
Chris Nicosia, Director

- Licensed Home Care
- Fatherhood Program
- Mobile Crisis Outreach
- Migrant Health Outreach
- Runaway & Homeless Youth Shelter
- Street Outreach Program
- Transitional Independent Living Program

Economic Development

Michael Michalski, Sr. Accounting Manager

- Entrepreneurial Technical Assistance
- Small Business Essentials Training
- Small Business Lending
- Incubator Space
- Consumer Appliance Loans



CHAUTAUQUA OPPORTUNITIES, INC. Community Council

Virtual Meeting
Tenant & Landlord Education
August 8th, 2024 at 5 PM

Join us for an informative and interactive meeting
featuring COI Housing Staff:

Scott Linden, Homelessness Services Manager
Diane Salvo, Housing Services Manager

Topics:

- Homelessness
- Housing Challenges
- Barriers
- COI Housing Programs

A CHANCE TO WIN

Mastercard Gift Card

\$25 (2)

\$50 (2)

\$100 (1)

5 PEOPLE WILL BE CHOSEN
AT RANDOM AT THE END OF
PRESENTATION



Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 818 9861 3642

Passcode: 511167



www.chautauquaopportunities.com



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[@chautopp](https://twitter.com/chautopp)



[@chautopp](https://www.instagram.com/chautopp)

Upcoming Events

AUG 8, 2024
Community Council
Virtual
5pm - 7pm

AUG 17, 2024
First Time Homebuyer class
- Dunkirk
9am - 5pm

SEPT 2, 2024
Labor Day
CLOSED

AUG 17, 2024
3rd Annual Fatherhood Car
Show
12pm - 3pm

AUG 23, 2024
Staff Development Day
CLOSED

SEPT 21, 2024
First Time Homebuyer class
- Jamestown
9am - 5pm

Contact Us

For all general inquiries, please contact :

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Dunkirk, NY 14048
(716) 366-3333
info@chautopp.org