

July/August 2020

**RAINBOWS**  
fulfilling potential to live

# The Canvas

## Letter from the President



As you know, we made the difficult decision this year not to host Rainbows' on-site summer day program "Camp Woodchuck" due to COVID-19 concerns. This was a

disappointment for all the staff, children, families we serve, and volunteers. In making the decision, we kept in mind one of our ten Guiding Principles to "Make children and families our highest priority". Sometimes it hurts all of us to do the right thing.

Instead, we offered in-home Camp activities in individual family homes for 58 children and youth and employing 60 Direct Support Professionals (DSP) to deliver the services. While nothing can make up for that in-person social interaction many of us have missed during this time, the staff, Campers, and families have done an amazing job intertwining activities and connecting with other Campers via technology.

Weekly activity packets were prepared for each DSP that included everything they needed for hands-on activities. From crafts to virtual field trips to walking the red carpet for the Annual Fashion Show and showing off their individual talents through the Annual Talent Show, the activities were designed to keep everyone engaged, safe and healthy.

One DSP, Maddie, said "The kids and staff definitely miss seeing each other, but we're proud to continue providing services safely in family homes. It's different, but we still get to know the personalities and favorites of the kids."

Links to the virtual Fashion Show and Talent Show are on Rainbows' Facebook and YouTube Channels. Enjoy watching and know that Rainbows is doing its best to continue quality services during this pandemic time.

Take care.

Deb



## Staff Excellence



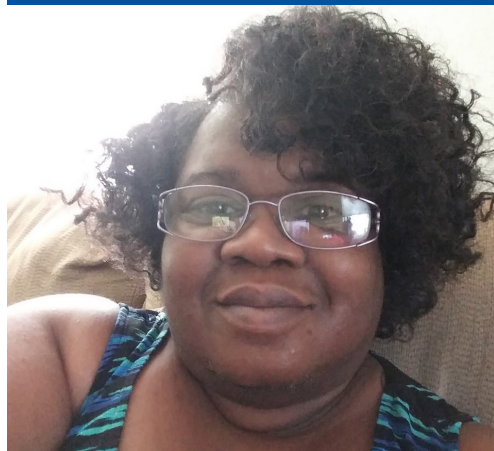
Lynlea Southards, Family Support Services Coordinator was honored by the Wichita Business Journal for Excellence in Health Care. Lynlea recently led her team to pivot from a center-based summer program to an in-home camp-like experience complete with crafts, outdoor play, video instruction, special events and more.

"I am proud to say that we have been able to provide a fun, safe Camp-like experience to 58 children and youth (ages 6-21) through the dedication and flexibility of 85 staff members. When families tell me how much it means to them to have a Rainbows' direct care professional in their home keeping their child safe with fun summer activities, I know it has been worth it and we are all stronger for the experience," said Lynlea.

Congratulations! Thank you for making a difference for children and families every day.



## Employee Profile



Direct Service Professional Erica Anyalebechi has almost 24 years of experience working with children in our community. During the school year, Erica works for USD 259 while also serving as a Rainbows' lead for weekend services at Kids' Cove. Summer 2020 is Erica's eighth summer working as a DSP for Camp Woodchuck.

"A former staff member told me about Rainbows," said Erica. "She told me I would love it, especially during Camp. I have always loved working with and helping children reach their potential, and these kids and families are amazing!"

"Erica is always willing to help and try new things," said Camp Director Tiffany Graf. "She's up for the challenge for whatever the kids may need."

"A normal summer at Camp is very, very busy and full of excitement," said Erica. "This year with COVID-19 is different but I am still committed to helping each client become independent and successful."

Erica comes from a very close and fun-loving family. When she's not at school or Rainbows, "I like reading books, crafting and hanging out with my grandchildren, nieces and nephews," she said.

## Staff and Families create strong bond over Summer

Kennedy enjoys music, videos and books just like most 16 year-old girls. She's been a regular at Rainbows most of her life.

She has enjoyed Rainbows' Camp Woodchuck for the last 10 years. Fun activities and one-to-one attention support her needs this summer during the COVID-19 pandemic. When Kennedy's high school classes went online, Kristi, a Rainbows' Direct Care Professional provided support in the family home and helped with her school work while her family worked. "It was a quick transition to online school and more time in the home, but it's been somuch fun," said Kristi.

This summer Kennedy and Kristi have enjoyed feeding the lemurs at Tanganyika Wildlife Park, reading books and enjoying the outdoors by taking long walks on the nature trail in her neighborhood. "Every week I pick up supplies from Rainbows that Kennedy and I can do during the week at her home," said Kristi. "They also provide instructions and fun videos that connect us to the Woodchuck Adventure theme."

Campers are able to visit with friends who are also at home through Skype. "It's fun to see the kids light up when they see their friends," said Kristi.



## Want to **volunteer** for Rainbows?

**Contact Melani Kliewer,**  
Volunteer Coordinator: [mkkliewer@rui.org](mailto:mkkliewer@rui.org)  
or **316.871.8959**

### New Date for Peter Hampel's Luau



With the health and safety of guests as a priority during the COVID-19 pandemic, Peter Hampel's Luau will not take place in 2020. Hampel Oil would like to invite friends and family to gather in August 2021 for the next Peter Hampel's Luau, a benefit for Rainbows United.

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