



Save the Date for Bethany for Children & Families' annual **Community Celebration** to honor the dedicated families, individuals, and businesses who assist and uplift neighbors in need!

Enjoy food, drinks, raffle, and live music.

Date: **Friday, November 3, 2023**

Location: The Stern Center, Rock Island, IL



Community Celebration presented by



Community Celebration Ruth Evelyn Katz Adoptive Family of the Year:

Julie Ackerson and Thomas Boyd

Adopting one child can be a challenge, not to mention three! But the unwavering commitment of Julie Ackerson and Thomas Boyd has led to a wonderful family of six.

Julie and Tom fostered their niece and nephews for three years before adoption. They are this year's Ruth Evelyn Katz Adoptive Family of the Year.

"We are a close-knit family. My kids and their cousins have always been close, and now they're like siblings," Julie said.

Ackerson and Boyd were nominated by Bethany's Foster Care Supervisor, Ellen Nagle.

"The stability and grace Tom and Julie demonstrate has changed lives. The mutual love and respect seen in the home is admirable and deserves to be honored," said Nagle.



Community Celebration Foster Family of the Year: Lindsey and Jeremiah Shoemaker

A family of 11 is this year's Foster Family of the Year. Meet Lindsey and Jeremiah Shoemaker of Geneseo, Illinois. The couple has five biological children, and are fostering four children, including twins!

"We were excited to welcome each child into our house. It was something I always felt was laid on my heart," said Lindsay.

The Shoemakers were nominated for the award by Vicki Burke, Foster Care Licensing Supervisor.

"The Shoemakers have changed the lives of the children they care for through love, support, and selfless sacrifice. The Shoemakers have undoubtedly impacted lives for the better and that should be acknowledged and honored," Burke said.



Community Celebration Community Champion of the Year: St. Ambrose University Maintenance Crew

For nearly two decades, the generosity of St. Ambrose University and its Maintenance Crew have provided furnishings for some of the Quad Cities' neediest families. Crew members Jim Hannon, Terry Wilson, and Kaylon Spengler are this year's Community Champions.

"With donations from St. Ambrose, foster parents who need an additional bed when a child has been added to their family receive one. Elderly clients who have been sweltering in the summer heat have an air conditioner," said Bethany President and CEO Bill Steinhauser, who nominated the crew for this award.

"St. Ambrose and its crew assist and uplift; they aid those in need and allow them to thrive. With their gifts, they create for our clients a great and lasting beginning," Steinhauser added.



Bethany's New Home: 1701 River Drive, Moline

As the needs for services for at-risk children, individuals, and families grows, so does Bethany! Employees are settling into their workspaces at our new location as renovations continue to take place. More than 50 employees are housed together in one location which allows for more efficient and effective responses to clients' needs.



Recently, more than a dozen volunteers from Davenport's new Amazon facility helped tear down drywall to create a space for the agency's after-school program.



Soon, you'll be invited to **gift and uplift** to help with the purchase of this building through our capital campaign!

Back to School Campaign

Because of you, \$3,214 was raised to help fund these endeavors:

- Mental and behavioral health therapy for more than 1,000 Scott County students.
- The Phoenix Day Treatment Program for emotionally and behaviorally disturbed students referred from the 14 Illinois School Districts.
- Programs that help youth navigate peer pressure, relationships, and prevent teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- An afterschool Therapeutic Recreation Program that helps youth learn social and anger management skills.



Thanks to Modern Woodmen of America for collecting 48 backpacks and school supplies for students in the Phoenix Day Treatment and the Therapeutic Recreation Programs.

Program Spotlight: Behavioral Health Intervention Services (BHIS)

Expressing feelings and solving problems can be a challenge for all of us. Preschoolers can have an especially difficult time with this, and if there's an underlying mental or behavioral health issue, it often carries over to the classroom, resulting in yelling, hitting, and other disruptive behaviors.

It's estimated that up to 60% of students do not receive the treatment they need due to stigma and lack of access to services. Of those who do get help, nearly two-thirds do so only in school. Virtually every community has a school that can serve as an ideal context for prevention, intervention, positive development, and regular communication between school and families.



Bethany is thankful to work in collaboration with the Rock Island County 708 Mental Health Board and the East Moline School District to provide behavioral intervention for at-risk preschoolers.



Rosa Almanza, the Bethany Interventionist, is pictured center above. She identifies children with challenging behaviors early so children are less likely later in life to engage in criminal activity, abuse substances, or commit suicide, and more likely to respond appropriately socially and perform better in school. Resources are also provided to parents.

MERIT Award Winner:

Bethany's MERIT Award Winner for the second quarter of 2023 is Karen Semmens. Karen is a Child Welfare Assistant I in the Foster Care Program based in Moline.

The nomination stated: "Karen Semmens deserves to be recognized for her dedication to Bethany for Children & Families and the clients that she serves.



"Karen takes initiative to volunteer to complete tasks or projects when she sees the need. She works well with other staff and often offers suggestions and reports problems to the appropriate staff. Karen leads by example and her cheerfulness and attitude are infectious to those around her. Karen embodies Bethany's mission to keep children safe, strengthen families, and build healthy communities."

Congratulations, Karen, for receiving this award. Keep up the good work!

The "MERIT Employee of Distinction Award" recognizes an employee for his/her distinguished service to the agency on a quarterly basis. This individual has displayed **Motivation**, **Excellence**, **Responsibility**, **Integrity**, and **Teamwork** in the execution of going beyond his/her job duty and responsibilities.

Angel Tree

As the holiday season approaches, Bethany has begun to make preparations for Angel Tree (the annual Christmas giving program) and holiday food basket distribution.

This program continues to address the ever-growing needs of children and families in the agency's care during the holiday season. Angel Tree ensures that every one of our clients and children will have presents under the tree. Last year, over 700 families were recipients of Angel Tree and/or food baskets. We hope to provide for even more families this year.



How Can You Help?

Request a holiday tag(s) by emailing John Huber at jhuber@bethany-qc.org by December 6th. You will receive instructions on purchasing gifts for a recipient(s) on the list!

You can also make a cash donation by sending a check to: Bethany for Children & Families
Attention: Angel Tree
1701 River Drive, Suite 200
Moline, IL 61265



How Can You Help?

Legacy Giving

Name Bethany as a beneficiary in your will, life insurance, or in your required minimum distribution.

Recurring Donations

Set up a recurring donation at www.bethany-qc.org.

In-Kind Contribution

Donate hygiene products, cleaning supplies, school supplies, furniture, diapers, and new baby items that directly benefit the children and families we serve. Please call Christina McNamara-Schmidt at (309) 797-6642 to inquire about in-kind donations.

How to Make a Donation

Want to donate online?

Visit www.bethany-qc.org.

Prefer to mail your donation?

Mail donations to P.O. Box 697
Moline, IL 61266



Call (309) 797-7700 today to support a safer, stronger and healthier Quad Cities.

Keeping children safe, strengthening families,
and building healthy communities since 1899.

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