



August 2023 Issue

5611 10th St., Great Bend, KS 67530
(620) 792-1325 Fax (620) 792-9119

18th Annual Charity Gala



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events



18th Annual Charity Gala

For the first time, those who reserve a seat early for Sunflower's Charity Gala will receive a discount on the registration fee. "Early-bird" prices are \$90 for an individual and \$700 for a table of eight.

These discounted prices are in effect through Aug. 31. After that date, the individual cost is \$100 and the table of eight is \$800.

The price for those who attend the Gala for the first time is \$75.

The 18th annual event is set for 5:30 to 10 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 30, at the Columbus Club, 723 Main.

The Knights of Columbus will provide the appetizers and meal. Beer will be available at an open bar, while wine and cocktails at no extra cost will be limited. Bluegrass music by 80 Proof Alice will entertain the crowd. Scott Donovan will serve as emcee, with support from TR Esfeld, auctioneer.

Those who want to donate items for the silent and live auctions are strongly encouraged to contact Cody Harris, 620-786-0198.

Reservations can be made online by visiting Sunflower's website, www.sunflowerdiv.com.

"September 30th will be here before we know it and we still need many items for both auctions," Cody said. "We trust in our generous community, which always comes through for the people we serve.

"The Gala is our biggest fundraiser of the year and the money we raise enhances the lives of infants, toddlers and adults with special needs. We are so grateful for the support we receive throughout our five-county service area and beyond."

Auction Item Sneak Peak



36" Blackstone
Griddle
Air fryer
Combo



Three
Antique Guns



5690 John Deere
Combine
Toy



Event
Tickets



Jerome Tang
Autographed
Basketball

Early Education Center—New Playground

We knew we needed new playground equipment at our Early Education Center (EEC), and thanks to \$10,000 from 100+ People Who Care, we kicked this project into high gear.

The new equipment should be installed by the time our Incredible Years Preschool welcomes students late in August. It includes a large play structure, swing set and poured-in-place rubber flooring.



“We were in desperate need of upgrading outdated equipment,” said Shelby Zuniga, executive director. “Funding from Sunflower Diversified Services Foundation and EEC, as well as private donations were added to the \$10,000 to make this happen.”

The playground is available for any child being served at EEC but is primarily used for Incredible Years. The kiddos in our Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services are often integrated into the preschool setting and benefit from the playground too.

ABA is for children up to age 5 on the autism spectrum.

“This playground equipment is fundamental for the social and physical development of a child,” Shelby said. “Jean Piaget, a well-known child-development psychologist, summed it up best by saying ‘play is the work of a child.’”

The initial budget was about \$30,000 but the project cost is \$54,197. “With increased construction costs and careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of rubber-mulch flooring versus poured-in-place rubber flooring, extra funding was allowed for the better floor,” Shelby explained. “Since we serve children with special needs, the poured-in-place floor gives them the best opportunity to enjoy the playground with their peers.”

Personal Accomplishments—Alex

Alex Juarez, 30, is well-known throughout Sunflower for his beaming smile and tendency to joke around a bit.

“Alex has a smile that lasts forever and is a jokester once he gets to know you,” said Tina Harkness, director of Case Management. “He has connected with staff and clients throughout Sunflower, and his neighbors in the community. Alex is one of the friendliest people you will ever meet.”

One of his current interests is using his talents to create artwork at our Beautiful Minds Art Studio. Alex is demonstrating a real passion for expressing himself through art.

Since 2011, Alex has collaborated with our staff in Day and/or Residential Services.



Alex Juarez displays artwork that he created at our Beautiful Minds Art Studio.

“Alex enjoys coming to the manufacturing plant five days a week,” Tina said. “Some days he works at a job in the plant and some days he chooses an activity in Day Services.”

“During the evenings, he may spend time with his peers at their group residence,” she continued. “Or he might decide to attend dances, go swimming or participate in other events. As always, Sunflower strives to offer as many options as possible to the people we serve.”



SHOP ~ Westside Market
SHIP ~ The UPS Store

Division of Sunflower Diversified Services, Inc.



IY Preschool—Third Class/Open House

When Incredible Years Preschool, 1312 Patton, hosts an open house on Aug. 21, participants will learn more about the new schedule, which offers three classes instead of two.

“In the past, we offered three sessions but then COVID came along,” said Alli Adams, program director and teacher. “Fortunately, things are back to normal and we are excited for this school year to begin.”

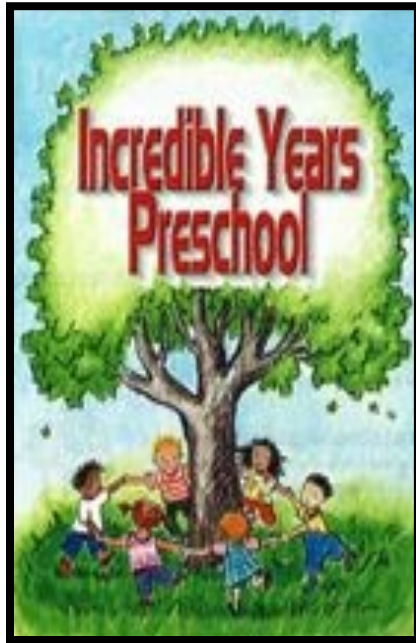
The class for younger children, designed for those age 2-and-a-half and older, is being split in two. These sessions meet twice a week and accommodate children that are not yet potty trained.

The third class focuses on kindergarten readiness and meets three times a week.

Thirty-two children are enrolled for the next term that begins either Aug. 23 or Aug. 24, depending on which class a child is enrolled in.

While 32 is the maximum, Incredible Years maintains a waiting list; parents are strongly encouraged to be part of this list.

Preschoolers participate in a lot of play-based learning, Alli noted. “They learn to share and to ask for things in an appropriate manner. We also present sessions on reading, colors, shapes and letters.”



McKinley Phillips, director of our Early Education Center (EEC), gives a lot of credit to Adams for the preschool's growth.

“Alli became program director a year ago and jumped straight into her new role,” McKinley said. “Alli brings a fresh set of eyes to the position, as well as a lot of knowledge about preschool development. She cares about the success of each child and strives to ensure they live up to their full potential.”

Open house

The Incredible Years open house is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 21. It is a come-and-go event, with refreshments.

All parents of incoming students are invited. But if someone is just interested in learning more about the preschool, they are welcome too.

“This is a good time to tour our facilities and meet our teachers,” Alli said. “All of us look forward to visiting with families and answering their questions.”

Day Services Opportunities

New opportunities in our Day Services schedule are proving to be a success in this post-COVID era.

In addition to options for employment, the people we serve now have more latitude in choosing fun community activities.

“Part of Sunflower’s philosophy always has focused on earning a paycheck at our manufacturing plant or in the community,” said Amanda Urban, director of compliance and quality assurance. “However, we also understand that community activities are essential to a well-rounded, rewarding lifestyle.”

The expanded Day Services offerings include a variety of activities, trips and training.

“We will always emphasize employment but, since COVID, some of the folks we serve were choosing to stay home during the day,” Amanda noted. “Expanding their daytime options is encouraging them to be more active.”

“People are collaborating with their Day Services managers to organize a blend of work and leisure activities. Some of these are free of charge, while others will require payment. This is in line with the philosophy that working at a job leads to even more community participation.”



Elisa Shores displays her finished epoxy project that she created at our Beautiful Minds Art Studio where she receives some of her Day Services.

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**Let us know at
SDS-Newsletter@sunflowerdiv.com**

Join The Club!

Sunflower Diversified Services "Invest In Kids" Club needs your help. 'Grant the Giraffe' knows the "Invest In Kids" Club ensures the future of infants and children with intellectual and developmental delays. All proceeds go to Sunflower Early Education Center and Incredible Years Preschool. The children and their families will be grateful.



Please make a donation today!

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Address: _____

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\$ _____ Thank You

Pledge Amounts—SDS can invoice you!

\$1 _____ \$5 _____ \$10 _____ \$20 _____ \$25 _____
\$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$150 _____ \$200 _____ Other _____

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Contributions ~ February 2023 through July 2023

The following individuals and businesses have contributed to the support of Sunflower's programs and special projects. Dollars received by the Foundation are gifted to the Agency to supplement local, state and federal funding. Our supporters and partners are very important to us, and we appreciate the involvement of each and every one.

If you know of anyone we have missed, or if we need to update our information, please let us know.

Donations accepted at 5611 10th St., PO Box 838, Great Bend, KS 67530 or online at <https://www.sunflowerdiv.com/support-us> ~ one time gift or monthly gifting option.

Contributions

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Rita Stolz
Dale & Bernadette Unruh
Kristen Walker Family
Larry & Connie Ward
Dana, Brian & Garrett Wilson
Ardis Witt

Employee of the Month Recognition

 <p>Sunflower Diversified Services, Inc. February 2023 "EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH" Awarded to April Thiessen In recognition of your dedication, passion, and hard work.</p>	<p>February 2023</p> <p>Employee of the Month April Thiessen—Residential</p> <p>Runners Up Jaclyn Smith—Medical Rosa Tavarez—Janitorial</p>
<p>March 2023</p> <p>Employee of the Month Mandy Grizzell—Production</p> <p>Runners Up Ale Velez—EEC Jodee Demel—Receptionist</p>	
	<p>April 2023</p> <p>Employee of the Month Brandon Wiig—Residential</p> <p>Runners Up Ann Webster—Residential Kathy Taylor—Receptionist</p>
<p>May 2023</p> <p>Employee of the Month Kathy Johnson—Transportation</p> <p>Runners Up Devina McPhee—Day Services Briana Lamb—CHS</p>	
	<p>June 2023</p> <p>Employee of the Month Kathy Taylor—Receptionist</p> <p>Runners Up Sandy Davis—Residential Jayne Clausen—Residential</p>
<p>July 2023</p> <p>Employee of the Month Paula Ingram—GAF</p> <p>Runners Up Theresa Habiger—Medical Andrew Rincon—Day Services</p>	

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GALA

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Make checks payable to Sunflower Diversified Services Foundation. Thank you!