

LAWRENCE BUSINESS MAGAZINE

2024 Q4



IMPACT *of* VOLUNTEERING

Fueling Growth, Connection, and Shaping Our Community

O'Connell
CHILDREN'S SHELTER

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

It Takes a Village

O'Connell Children's Shelter is able to provide emergency care for community youth in need because of the help of its many generous volunteers.

by Maren Ludwig, O'Connell Children's Shelter, photos by Steven Hertzog

At O'Connell Children's Shelter, we have just finished the 38th annual Festival of Trees, where hundreds of community volunteers create and then donate trees, wreaths and other works of art to be auctioned off in support of our agency and those we serve. The Festival of Trees is such a special time for us because it brings our entire community together around the holidays for such an important cause.

O'Connell Children's Shelter was formed in 2021 through a merger between two long-standing Lawrence nonprofit organizations: O'Connell Youth Ranch (established in 1976) and The Shelter Inc. (established 1981). Today, our services include those of both originating agencies and so much more. We provide emergency care for children in our community, usually involving serving a family in one of their most desperate times. It could include placing a youth who needs care when their family has been in an accident, keeping a child abuse victim safe while an investigation occurs or helping to intervene for a short-term stay when family tensions are high.

We also provide long-term and short-term care in our residential and foster homes for youth in the child-welfare system. These are usually youth who have had multiple placement disruptions, and we aim to stabilize their living situation and provide necessary support to prepare them for the future.

A BETTER HOME FOR SCHOLARS

Evans Scholars at the University of Kansas are living and learning in their freshly renovated and expanded hall. McElroy's is proud to have been the heating, air and plumbing contractor – in partnership with Mar Lan Construction.



PROUD MEMBER
of the Lawrence
Community for
Over 50 years

**GROWING,
EXPANDING &
ADDING JOBS**

**GIVING
BACK
to the Community**

**JOIN
OUR TEAM**
berryglobal.com/careers

Berry

Always advancing to protect what's important.
www.berryglobal.com

What you might not know, however, are the services we provide to children, youth and families to keep them together and strengthen the family unit. We believe healthy families make a healthy community and have made a significant investment in meeting families' needs in our community in whatever way necessary.

We can help determine Medicaid eligibility for families who meet income standards so they can access health insurance immediately.

- Knowing that successful school attendance and a high school diploma are critical to bright and prosperous futures for youth, we provide truancy case-management services to help youth stay in school and be successful.
- We provide intensive in-home therapeutic and case-management services aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect, and to provide specific targeted help to families impacted by poverty, hoping to change the generational hold and effects it can have on families.
- We also offer services where behavioral-health challenges result in young people engaging in criminal behavior, seeking to change their behavior and the pipeline from youth offender to adult offender, ultimately making our community safer.

We cannot do any of this vital work without our volunteers. You will find a number of volunteers supporting us on our Board of Directors. Most of our Board has served numerous terms, but none more than Wint Winter Jr. Winter just retired after serving 43 years on our Board. We have our master gardener, Susan Andersen, who joined us after her retirement. She now volunteers nearly full time, leading a team of our youth in

our garden program, teaching them to grow healthy food and helping to create a sustainable future. We also have volunteer Susan Stuever, a retired nurse who comes every week to our homes to help us manage the multiple aspects of health care for the youth we serve. We have Cindy and Kevin Harmon, and Dan Koehn, who have organized the Summer's End Cruise-In Car Show for the last seven years. They chose to give the money raised to support our prevention programs. Then there's the Kaw Valley Quilters Guild, which ensures our youth feel loved and supported by creating a beautiful range of handmade quilts for them to select as a treasured keepsake. Finally, we have several folks who show up at the holidays to guarantee our youth feel loved—Garber Enterprises with their duffels of essentials, Lawrence Sunshine Foundation fulfilling wish list requests for the youth, Norine Spears leading a group of friends to create jacket packets (with gloves, hats, warm socks and candy) for each young person and The Eagles taking the youth holiday shopping each year. These are just a few of those who mean so much to our organization as they give of themselves year after year.

When a nonprofit has close to a 50-year history of serving its community, it is built on the good works of so many who have come before us and have shared their time and talents. As the holidays approach, we are so grateful to all those who give. As we look to the future and seek to expand on our services with a special focus on crisis services for youth, we will continue to need our community's commitment. Our promise to you is to continue to be there for our community's most at-risk children, youth and families. ▲





THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE Lawrence, KS






RECRUITING SOLUTIONS

YOU TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS, WE TAKE CARE OF YOU

1000 Iowa Lawrence, KS 66044 | 785-749-7550 | www.expresspros.com
Kate.Chinn@expresspros.com

CONTINGENT STAFFING • CONTRACT STAFFING • PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT • SKILLED TRADES • ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING • INDUSTRIAL STAFFING

Your Protection – Our Strength



WWW.ELLIOTTINSURANCEGROUP.COM

1201 Wakarusa Drive, Suite A4
785.841.9538

**Local Businesses and their Growth continue to be the
Foundation of our Local Economy.
The Lawrence Business Magazine Foundation Awards
celebrate our local growing businesses adding jobs.**

THE FOUNDATION AWARDS

Honor Businesses located in Douglas County that are
locally owned or locally franchised,
have been in business a minimum of three years,
and shown growth in employment by 20% or 20 employees.

&

The Minority-Owned Business Foundation Impact Award and The Woman-Owned Business Foundation Impact Award

Honor Minority Owned or Woman Owned businesses located in Douglas County that are
locally owned or locally franchised and have been in business a minimum of three years and
shown stability or growth in employment over the past three years as well as making

LAWRENCE BUSINESS MAGAZINE
FOUNDATION AWARDS

Presenting Sponsor

 **INTRUST**
Bank.

**Has your business grown? Are you adding jobs?
Are you a Minority-Owned or Woman-Owned business
making a positive impact and supporting the community?
Then you should be a part of the Celebration!!
Applications for the 2025 Awards online now.**

For more details, applications, and information about Sponsorships, Previous Honorees,
and this years' Lawrence Business Magazine FOUNDATION AWARDS visit:

LawrenceBusinessMagazine.com/Foundation