



CANIChronicles

Fighting Poverty. Building Hope.

A Year in Review at CANI

2009 was a significant year for CANI and the individuals, families, and communities that we serve. The following is a summary of a few of the agency's milestones and accomplishments.

Head Start:

- The Head Start site at the Southeast YMCA has a new home at St. Henry's Community Center. Additionally, the site at Ivy Tech moved to the north campus across the street.
- Head Start sites Hanna-Creighton, Salvation Army and Whitley County received accreditation from the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of the Young Child). This distinction enhances CANI Head Start's status as a quality child development program.
- Early Head Start awarded for 72 slots to serve pregnant women, infants and toddlers to age 3 in Allen, Noble and Whitley Counties.

Weatherization:

- Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, CANI received funds to Weatherize more low income families' homes. The agency was allocated more than \$2.2 million in Home Energy Conservation dollars. That translated to roughly \$1.8 million in state funding for Allen County and \$415,000 for Whitley County.

Pathways to Excellence:

- Over the summer, CANI completed a self-study to assess its operational strengths and weaknesses as part of the Pathways to Excellence quality improvement program. The peer review was recently returned and the agency is using the feedback to set goals for the future.

Youth Program:

- CANI launched a youth program in July with a career shadow day called "Who Can I Be." Participants observed profes-

sionals in various fields. The agency hopes to expand the breadth of the program to serve more youth.

Community Services:

- CANI now has the ability to digitize energy assistance applications. The paperless system allows for more accessibility and saves the agency money on paper expenses.
- The CANI office in Warsaw moved to a new site at 1515 Provident Drive, Suite 140 (see story on p. 6.)

Lowe's Heroes:

- Through a partnership with Lowe's, a former CANI client was the recipient of a large-scale home improvement project. Prior to the renovation, Opal Brinager and her two great-grandsons were living in substandard conditions. The project was made possible through the generosity of the Lowe's Heroes program in conjunction with CANI and significant donations from local businesses (see wrap-up story on p. 5.)

HPRP:

- The Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) is a new way to get homeless people off the streets and out of shelters into permanent housing. CANI is working with local homeless shelters to serve the homeless population in north-



Stock Photo

Weatherization is the process of making a home more energy efficient. CANI also fixes heating systems, such as repairing poorly installed equipment or leaking heating ducts, and can repair or replace some furnaces.

east Indiana. Through this program CANI has expanded services into Huntington, Wells and Adams counties.

Hopewell Pointe:

- CANI has signed an agreement with Keller Development to build a rent-to-own 35-family housing complex called Hopewell Pointe.

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CANI's Mission: CANI helps communities, families, and individuals remove the causes and conditions of poverty.

CANI Offices		
<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Allen	227 E Washington Blvd Fort Wayne, IN 46802	423-3546 or 800-589-2264
DeKalb	209 N Jackson St. Auburn, IN 46706	927-0162
LaGrange	109 E Central Ave, Ste 4 LaGrange, IN 46761	463-5276
Noble	119 W Mitchell St. Kendallville, IN 46755	349-0713
Steuben	1208 S Wayne St. Angola, IN 46703	665-1160
Whitley	Lehmberg Medical Building 333 N Oak St, Ste K Columbia City, IN 46725	248-2848
<i>The following offices only provide childcare assistance...</i>		
Elkhart	421 S 2nd St, Ste 420 Elkhart, IN 46516	574-293-3460
Kosciusko	1515 Provident Drive Warsaw, IN 46580	574-267-2817

Regular CANI hours are
 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
 Monday to Thursday, and
 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. Friday.

**CANI will be closed
 Jan. 18th in observance of
 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day &
 Feb. 15th in observance of
 President's Day.**

CANI Management Team

Joseph H. Conrad
 Executive Director

Pamela Brookshire
 Director of
 Community Services






Mary Lee Freeze
 Head Start Director

Steve Hoffman
 Director of Administration and
 Development

CANI Chronicles

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 Coordinator, Lauren Caggiano, unless otherwise noted.**
Subscriptions are free.
For more information call (260) 399-4109.

To find out more about CANI, visit our website at www.canihelp.org.

One Man's Cup Overflows With Blessings

On the surface, this is the story of a man who received a furnace. But on a deeper level, this is the story of a man who received the gift of life.

Dan Brown, 56, held a steady job all his working life until 2007. That's when he was diagnosed with stage three throat cancer - while being without health insurance. As bills for medical treatment mounted, Dan felt more and more hopeless. The hospital wrote off as many of the expenses as they could, but Dan was still left with an exorbitant amount of debt. And high electric bills from an obsolete furnace didn't help the situation.

As a self-described agnostic, the initial diagnosis did not help his faith life. He suffered with a trachea tube in his throat for two and a half years. Then one day changed his life. The doctors ran a scan and there was no apparent sign of cancer on the screen! His cancer was gone, yes gone.

"God had touched me," he said.

Brown does not know why he was healed,

but he knows he wants to pay it forward. He still visits the oncology nurses at Parkview, who helped him through his treatment.

While in remission, he was referred to CANI and met Marde Martin in Community Services. Through her work he was connected to the Weatherization program. Inspector Ted Ramp contacted him in September to set up an assessment.

The first order of business was to install much needed insulation in his attic. Later, it

Weatherization Quick Facts:

- Provides free, energy-efficient improvements for the homes of about 200 low-income families a year
- Serves Allen, DeKalb, Noble, Steuben and Whitley counties
- Families must be at or below 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines



Photo By Ted Ramp, Weatherization Inspector

Dan Brown poses in his basement next to his new furnace, with a sign expressing his gratitude. Brown encourages people to apply for help if they need it.

was determined he qualified for a furnace.

"I flipped out when he told me I was approved for a furnace," Brown said about his reaction.

After the new furnace was installed, his bills went down about 20 percent with minimal furnace use. His savings will likely increase as the cold weather approaches.

Brown is grateful for the Weatherization team's work, noting that he is the recipient of a \$4,600-gift (the appraised value of the work performed).

It's clear Brown thinks highly of CANI and it's employees.

"I have nothing but good things to say about Ted," he said.

In his words, "CANI knocked my socks off," and he wanted to make sure everyone at CANI knew it. He called and left thank you messages for the Weatherization Supervisor, the Program Director, and the Executive Director. CANI Executive Director Joe Conrad was so touched by his voice mail message, he had it digitized and sent by email to staff so they could hear the gratitude of someone who was helped.

But Mr. Brown really wanted to speak to someone at CANI about his experience. So he called again and reached Director of Community Services Pam Brookshire and told her just how thankful he was for the help.

CANI GROUP NIGHT

Sunday, Jan. 31st • 5 p.m. • Memorial Coliseum

SPECIAL MEET AND GREET

- Before the game, meet the players and coaches!

HALFTIME ENTERTAINMENT

- Special half-time performance by the Russian Bar Act!

HIGH-FIVE TUNNEL

- Group members will be able to form the starting line-up tunnel!

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

- CANI group will receive a special PA recognition during the game!

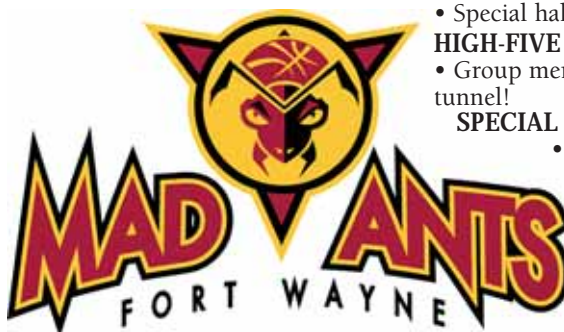
GET THERE EARLY

- CANI group members will be allowed to enter the arena early to watch warm ups and interact with the players.

MAD ANTS PROGRAM SALES

- CANI will be selling game programs and retaining half of the proceeds.

Contact Kim Myers, (260) 760-8927 ext. 223 for tickets. Cost is FREE to clients and \$1 for staff, donors and board members.



To find out more about CANI, visit our website at www.canihelp.org.

Head Start & Bowen Center: More than the Sum of their Parts

At CANI Head Start, there is a program, through a partnership with the Bowen Center, devoted to ensuring all children are in good mental health. Head Start recognizes that good mental health is paramount to getting a quality education.

As CANI Head Start's Behavioral Health Coordinator, Sally Jones-Evans works with children with mental health issues. Her job is wide in scope. She provides individual mental health observations for children in Head Start classrooms. She staffs all classrooms twice a year with the Disability Coordinator. She meets with staff and parents to make recommendations about redirection, discipline and treatment options. She also writes behavior/classroom modification plans for students with more severe behavioral issues.

In Evan's words, "I am a support and a listening ear for staff for professional and personal concerns."

Sally Jones-Evans, who has an extensive background in social work and outreach, works with the Bowen Center, a provider of behavioral health care services, to coordinate observations for all Head Start classrooms in Allen, Noble and Whitley counties. CANI Head Start has partnered with the Bowen Center in Noble and Whitley counties for over four years; Allen County was added in 2009.

Following the observation process, children who are "flagged" for potential behavior concerns are given particular attention. The extent of attention can range from simple classroom strategies to a classroom modification plan to a referral to a local mental health agency such as the Bowen Center. In Noble County, some children may be placed in a special therapeutic "SKILLS" classroom, where they can learn in a smaller environment and concentrate on social emotional skills. Bowen Center personnel staff the room using the "Al's Pals" social emotional curriculum.

Teachers, Family Advocates and parents are engaged throughout the process because they typically have more insight into the problem behavior.

The relationship with Bowen is a partnership. CANI Head Start benefits from the Bowen Center's knowledge and expertise and Bowen Center has the opportunity to provide the necessary early intervention for families.

According to Children's Services Manager Lori Ross, the approach is "very individualized." "Above all", she said, "the care is centered on the family's needs and specifications."

"We want families to know it's their choice...what they want to do and who they want to work with," she said.

Working with families can present many challenges. According to Ross, there is often the mistaken notion that a child will simply "grow out of" a particular behavior. Furthermore, there is a tendency to label a child as "special needs". This is counter-productive because children develop skills (fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, social/emotional) at different rates. Rather than placing a label on a child, she suggests instead offering the proper support and assistance that is necessary.

Ultimately, CANI Head Start's goal is to get the children ready for kindergarten. When a child's overall development is in balance, he or she is more likely to be successful in school. CANI Head Start works with the children and parents, so that when it comes times for them to transition to kindergarten they are as ready as they can be. Our partnership with Bowen Center helps us to achieve that goal.

For more information about the Bowen Center, visit www.bowencenter.org.



Photo Contributed

Learning to interact with other children in a healthy manner is a critical aspect of emotional development. Head Start is designed to foster an environment where all children feel valued.

**Have you heard?
CANI has a blog.
Check it out here:
www.insidecani.blogspot.com**

Inside CANI offers news and commentary on poverty-related issues and the programs and services of CANI.

Please bookmark this page for easy accessibility. We welcome feedback and suggestions.

To find out more about CANI, visit our website at www.canihelp.org.

CANI, Lowe's Restore Hope for LaGrange Woman

Opal Brinager, whose home improvement journey we chronicled in the past few issues, is now happy to be living in her mostly renovated house thanks to CANI, the Lowe's Heroes program, and many local businesses.

LaGrange resident Opal Brinager, 73, was chosen by Lowe's to receive assistance with some much needed home



Photo By Kim Myers, Development Coordinator

Thanks to the generosity of Lakeland Glass Inc., Opal's kitchen was transformed with new cabinets.

repairs. Prior to the project, Opal, a great-grandmother raising two sick boys on limited means, was living in an unsafe environment. CANI shared her touching story with Lowe's and the three Fort Wayne stores decided to join their resources to help Opal as part of the Lowe's Heroes program.

Over several months this past fall, Lowe's employees worked to renovate Opal's home. The crew made several improvements, including new flooring, kitchen countertops, cabinets, insulation, doors, dry wall and painting.

Now that the project is finished Opal and her great-grandsons are enjoying the fruits of Lowe's labor.

"This (project) has changed their lives completely because Opal doesn't have to worry about the repairs of the home," said Kim Myers, who organized the project on behalf of CANI. "She can focus on the boys and their needs."

Lowe's Heroes volunteer program helps to improve the communities where Lowe's employees work and live. Together, each store team identifies a community improvement project for store volunteers that will make a difference in their community.

And what a difference they made, not only on the home but on Opal's spirit. She said prior to the project she felt hopeless and struggled to cope with the problems life presented.

"It feels great to get up and see the kitchen," she said. "It's such a relief to not have everything fall apart."

Opal's kitchen received a face-lift with cabinetry donated by Forest River Inc.

Impressed by the Lowe's crew's professionalism, Opal said, "they really put themselves out there."

In addition to Lowe's generosity, several businesses and individuals in northeast Indiana extended a helping hand. The following made contributions of some kind: Subway in LaGrange, Applebee's in Kendallville, Terminix, Kendallville Iron & Metal, Logan's Landing, Lakeland Glass Inc., Cosperville Baptist Church, Kountry



Photo By Lauren Caggiano, Development Coordinator

Opal poses with her great-grandchildren in their new den.

Lumber, Forest River Inc, Red Skillet, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Myers and Edward's Floor Covering.

Lowe's and CANI are considering partnering again next year on a similar project. For more information about Lowe's Heroes, visit www.lowes.com/community.



Photo Contributed

CANI employees Kim Myers, Julie Kelley and Andrea Young decorated a tree at the Embassy Theatre's Festival of Trees on behalf of CANI. Founded in 1984, the Festival of Trees is a fundraising and community goodwill event that supports ongoing operational and restoration efforts for the Embassy Theatre Foundation, Inc.

To find out more about CANI, visit our website at www.canihelp.org.

2010 CANI Chronicles Reader Survey

- 1) How would you describe your relationship to CANI?
 - a) Donor / Sponsor
 - b) Interested community member
 - c) Employee at a social service or government agency involved in community development, public policy, or serving low-income population
 - d) Other non-profit employee
 - e) Vendor / Contractor doing business with CANI
 - f) Other _____
- 2) How often do you read CANI Chronicles?
 - a) Every time it comes to me in the mail
 - b) Not every month but more than a couple of times
 - c) I have read it once or twice
 - d) I have seen it, but never read it
- 3) How do you obtain CANI Chronicles? (Please circle most applicable.)
 - a) It's mailed to me at home
 - b) It is mailed to me at work
 - c) It is mailed to someone else at my work
 - d) It shows up in my newspaper
 - e) I pick it up at a public place (please specify:) _____
- 5) How much of the issue do you typically read?
 - a) All of it
 - b) Most of it
 - c) I skim it and read what interests me
 - d) None or not much of it
- 6) Would you say the amount of content is:
 - a) About right
 - b) Not enough
 - c) Too much
- 7) What topics generally interest you? (Please circle all that apply.)
 - a) Success stories about individuals and families
 - b) Details about agency programs/partnerships
 - c) Announcements about agency events and ways I can support CANI
 - d) Articles about funding and grants
 - e) Information about how CANI strengthens the community
 - f) Other (please specify:) _____
- 8) Have you ever made a donation in response to reading the CANI Chronicles?
 Yes No
- 9) Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Please mail this completed survey to:
CANI
Attention: Lauren Caggiano
PO Box 10570
Fort Wayne, IN 46853-0570

Or you may complete the survey online on our Web site, www.canihelp.org.

Thank you

CANI Thanks Our Donors

We'd like to thank the individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations that have recently supported CANI. Your financial gifts and in-kind contributions help us fight poverty and build hope - thank you for all you do!

December - 2009

Hero (\$10,000+)

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Fort Wayne Comet Hockey*

Thank you

To find out more about CANI, visit our website at www.canihelp.org.

Lincoln Grant Boosts Family Development

Thanks to a grant from the Lincoln Foundation, CANI can expand its Family Development program.

The \$35,000-grant will immediately fund a new part-time case manager position devoted to Allen County, which equates to about 20 more families served at a time. As of the time of press, the agency was in the process of hiring a Family Services Support Worker. Currently, there are eight staff members working in Family Development.

Director of Administration and Development Steve Hoffman said the grant is significant because the program focuses on the core issues surrounding poverty.

“Our core strategic program centers around the belief that the answer to fighting poverty is through an intensive, long-term and comprehensive program like Family Development,” he said.

One benefit is the program’s structure is already in place, including program design, supervision, policies and procedures, assessment and action plan tools, database systems,

training, etc.

Specifically, Family Services Support Workers help families through the use of the Family Development Matrix, an assessment tool designed by CANI that measures self-sufficiency in 12 life areas: income, adult education, employment, housing, food, child care, health care, transportation, utilities, support systems, family interactions and addictions.

Family Development is rooted in a top-down approach. The matrix is used as an assessment tool for families to achieve goals through increased knowledge skills and attitudes, which then leads to improved behaviors. Behaviors then lead to long-term outcomes, which are improvements in family conditions. When families achieve long-term outcomes, they are increasing their overall self-sufficiency and the community benefits by having stronger families and less poverty.

Special thanks goes to the Lincoln Financial Foundation’s Jean Vrabel for her help through the process. The Lincoln Financial Foundation, established in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1962, is based on the premise



Stock photo

Family Support Service Workers help families obtain affordable housing, find a job, or achieve other life goals.

that the corporation has responsibilities as a socially responsible corporate citizen and that goes hand-in-hand with charitable giving to enhance the quality of life in communities where its employees live and work.

For more information about the Lincoln Financial Foundation, visit www.lfg.com.

Warsaw Office Enhances Client Experience

The CANI office in Warsaw moved to a new location in a newly opened building last September.

The building was made possible through funding from the K21 Health Foundation, which serves to improve the health and wellness of residents in Kosciusko County. According to the foundations Web site, “We are proud to contribute this facility to the community, where many health services can be offered in one location to those that need assistance.”

The new office, in the K21 Health Services Pavilion in Warsaw (1515 Provident Drive), houses several health and social service agencies. The mission of K21 is to bring together health services for the benefit of the community.

CANI meets the criteria as a tenant because it offers safe and affordable child care assistance through child care vouchers (the only service CANI offers at this location.). The other tenants are many of the referral agen-

cies CANI works with, like Women, Infants & Children (WIC) and Heartline Pregnancy Center. Additionally, the pavilion houses Good Samaritan Fund; Health Connect, Inc including B.A.B.E Boutique and Health Connect’s Help Center; Kosciusko County Cancer Care Fund; Kosciusko County Health Department’s Immunization, Well Child and Prenatal Clinics; Kosciusko Home Care & Hospice, Inc. and Medication & Dental Assistance. The facility can accommodate a few additional programs, services, or organizations in the future that may be a good health service fit.

The close proximity to these services is an added bonus for CANI’s clients, who often have transportation issues.

CANI Family Services Manager Marianne Stanley was referred to the location from someone at the Salvation Army, where CANI was formerly housed. “The new location is more of a one-stop shop,” Stanley said. “You can access all these services in one building.”



Photo Contributed

Families come to the Warsaw office for child-care assistance. In addition to Kosciusko County, CANI has intake offices in Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben and Whitley counties.

In addition to the convenience, there is a larger waiting room, which allows for more privacy and confidentiality.

For more information about the K21 Foundation, visit www.k21foundation.org.

To find out more about CANI, visit our website at www.canihelp.org.

Do you dine at Halls?



CANI has free Community Partnership cards available for use at any Hall's Restaurant or specialty service. CANI earns a 5-percent rebate for restaurant dining, catering or specialty services. The reward increases to 10 percent when you show your card at the Guesthouse Hotel for lodging needs. It's a win-win situation: it costs you nothing but a good meal and CANI earns a monthly rebate check reflecting your activity. Call Kim Myers, (260) 399-4106, to get your card today.

CANI Fighting Poverty.
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Yes, I would like to give to CANI so I can help fight poverty and build hope!

Name _____

Phone number _____

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Please write amount of your donation on the appropriate line.
 I want to be a:

_____ Hero (\$10,000 +)	_____ Guardian (\$250 - \$499)
_____ Visionary (\$1,000 - \$9,999)	_____ Advocate (\$100 - \$249)
_____ Ambassador (\$500 - \$999)	_____ Friend (\$1 - \$99)

Your name will be published in CANI's annual report and newsletters.

And remember, your gift is tax-deductible.

CANI Fighting Poverty.
Building Hope.
COMMUNITY ACTION OF NORTHEAST INDIANA

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Fort Wayne, IN 46853-0570

Or you may donate online at
www.canihelp.org.

Thank you

To find out more about CANI, visit our website at www.canihelp.org.