



Commitment to mission

Rainbows is sorry that our financial issues have caused concern for families and for the community. The fact is, details are still being discovered. Rainbows has been fortunate to have a team of loaned and volunteer financial professionals helping sort through and create accurate information. We are thankful to Spirit AeroSystems, Sedgwick County, and Cox Communications for this help.

In all discussions for moving forward, Rainbows remains strongly committed to the mission of serving young children including those with special needs and their families. While we have closed two early care and education centers, all children who qualify for services are still receiving those services within our community.

Hale Ritchie leading Rainbows

Long-time Rainbows' supporter and retired Wichita Businessman, Hale Ritchie, assumed the role of Chief Restructuring Officer Monday, August 10. Ritchie is overseeing restructuring efforts and will ensure future financial viability for the agency. "If I didn't think we could save this place, I wouldn't be here," said Ritchie to the Sedgwick County Commissioners when he spoke at the September Commission meeting.

Ritchie is donating his time and reports to Rainbows Board of Directors. Steve Cox, Board Chair will remain in his post through fiscal year 2009- 2010. Deb Voth, Chief Operating Officer handles day to day operations.

Contracts secured

Rainbows has been negotiating with local partners and funders under bankruptcy protection. On Monday, August 31 the Wichita School District approved the contract for Rainbows to provide services for special needs children ages 3 - 5. Rainbows' Board Chair Steve Cox addressed the group and pledged Rainbows' support to provide needed services for special needs children and to be open about Rainbows' financial situation as it unfolds.

On Wednesday, September 2 Sedgwick County Commissioners approved the Rainbows' contract. This contract includes some funding for Targeted Case Management, in home supports, respite, Connecting Point, early intervention services and parent training programs. Hale Ritchie pledged his support to seeing Rainbows into the future and shared his optimism for the future financial viability of the agency.

What is happening with the buildings?

Now that Ritchie Family Center and Uptown Kids have been closed, some of the items are being redistributed to Kids' Cove and Kids' Point. Other items may be sold in accordance with our agreements under bankruptcy protection and reorganization.

Items that have been in storage are also being inventoried for use or to sell. Some items will continue to be stored as storage facilities are available.

Employees based out of Rainbows' Family Enrichment Center including Infant/Toddler staff will stay put for now. Staff and services at Rainbows Connection are also still in place. Once a realtor is selected and plans for restructuring are put in place, more information will come.

NAEYC Accreditation and KQRS Ratings

Congratulations to Brenda Traugott and the Uptown Kids staff for their tireless work toward achieving National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation. The notification completed an 18-month application process. "The administration, teaching staff, and families of Rainbows United, Inc. Uptown Kids are all to be congratulated for being one of the first programs in the country to earn the mark of quality represented by the reinvented NAEYC Accreditation system," states the announcement.

"I am proud of the staff and the work it took to achieve these goals," said Jennifer Francois, who oversaw the process. She adds that Uptown Kids also received a 5 Star Kansas Quality Rating System (KQRS) and that earlier this year, Kids' Cove received a 4 Star Rating.

The Proctor Ritchie Center and Ritchie Family Center have also been accredited by NAEYC. "It's a bittersweet announcement," said Deb Voth, Chief Operation Officer, "what an incredible honor and achievement for Rainbows staff and families."

For future updates and parent information please visit <http://www.rainbowsunited.org/educational-parents.php> periodically.



September 14, 2009