

DHS employee with a heart to serve

Serving the citizens of Pottawatomie County Department of Human Services for the last 26 years, Community Resource Specialist Carol Hinex learns the importance of community. She currently works with low income families encouraging them to obtain diplomas and/or GED for future employment. She is also active in the DHS Walk for Wellness program to track how many minutes walked daily from Aug. 1-Dec. 31 of this year. In addition to her work with families, she has also served as a Child Welfare Specialist for four years. Hinex said she enjoys meeting clients the most.

"I like to encourage and share with my clients the positive possibilities available if they decide to have continuing education," Hinex said. "Their future employment and education will lead to self-sufficiency."

Born in Oklahoma City and raised in a small town outside of Seminole, Hinex came to Shawnee for college. After graduating from Oklahoma Baptist University, Hinex found love in Shawnee and made her move permanent in 1984. Hinex and her husband have been married for 27 years and have two children: Tasha, 26, and CJay, 17. She said she enjoys the comfort of the Shawnee community. If she is not gardening, collecting cookbooks or finding bargains at consignment shops, Hinex is working throughout the community.

Hinex serves as the chairperson for a health coalition known as Pottawatomie Alliance Toward Community Health (PATCH), a partnership with Gateway to Prevention and Recovery in Shawnee. She has been an active member since 2009 and is a part of a group of other working professionals within the community. She said her membership in PATCH opened doors for networking with other businesses and learning about available resources.

"She is not only an asset to her peers, but she also exemplifies OKDHS mission," Hinex's supervisor and Social Service specialist IV Vickie Morgan said. "She endeavors to assist each person she deals with on a daily basis by matching their need(s) to an OKDHS program, other agency programs and/or a community resource, thus enabling them to lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives."

"I wasn't educated about tobacco control before, but now have had the opportunity to learn. My experience as a PATCH member has been wonderful. I've learned so much about the fight for tobacco control," Hinex said. "It's a huge battle, but many victories, both large and small, can be accomplished."

PATCH meets every first Wednesday of the month in The Doctor's Building, 1414 N. Kennedy Suite 108, at noon. Contact Holly Gordon at (405) 275-3391 ext. 105 for more information.