



Newsletter

WISCONSIN YOUTH COMPANY program

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Many Staff Return in Fall; Work at Summer Camp

Most of the Dane Region and Waukesha Region site supervisors are planning on returning to work for AFTER SCHOOL for the 2008-09 school year.

“It looks like about 20 out of 24 of our supervisors are planning on returning,” said Dane Program Director Andrew Stuht.

In the Waukesha Region 12 out of 15 or 80 percent of the supervisors have confirmed for fall and 90 percent or 21 out of 24 site specialists have said they plan to return to AFTER SCHOOL.

About 60 percent or 30 out of 52 site specialists have indicated that they plan on returning in Dane according to Stuht.

“For the vast majority it’s some kind of life change that causes them to decide not to return,” said Stuht. “For some it’s moving away or graduation from college and for others it’s a change in their school schedule.”

In the Dane Region about 60 percent of staff are students.

Many school year staff also work at Wisconsin Youth Company summer day camps. The

Dane Region operates eight summer day camps and the Waukesha Region operates four. In Waukesha most staff hired for this summer are also school year AFTER SCHOOL staff. In Dane 20 out of 70 summer staff also work for AFTER SCHOOL during the school year. Overall, in Dane about 90 percent of the summer staff return each summer.



Viki Lee, right, and Kristina Martinez are new summer camp directors this year. Both are school year site supervisors, Viki at Randall and Kristina at Crestwood.



Barb Townsend, center, was recognized for 19 years of service to AFTER SCHOOL. Executive Director Nancy Goodell, left, and Director of Administration Marylou Grzadziewski, right, presented her with flowers at the Dane staff recognition dinner May 20.

Long Time Shorewood Supervisor Retires

Barb Townsend, site supervisor at Shorewood AFTER SCHOOL for the past eight years retired at the end of the school year. She worked for Wisconsin Youth Company’s AFTER SCHOOL Division for 19 years. In addition to Shorewood, she was also site supervisor at the Wingra and Leopold sites.

She developed a reputation within the AFTER SCHOOL Division for training and mentoring her staff.

Prior to working for AFTER SCHOOL Townsend, who has a degree in preschool and kindergarten education, was the director of

two Madison preschools, Meeting House and Orchard Ridge. She was also a volunteer for Hospice and sat on the Hospice board for six years.

What will she miss most about AFTER SCHOOL? “The kids,” she smiled. “I always enjoyed working with the kids who liked to do long term projects like building birdhouses.”

Townsend plans to spend time with her family at their lake cabin north of Westville, WI. She and her husband have two daughters and four grandchildren.

New Director, Assistant for Middle School U



Andrea McMillen, left, and Michael Graveen

Michael Graveen, Site Supervisor at Leopold AFTER SCHOOL, is the new director for Middle School U, Wisconsin Youth Company's summer enrichment program for middle school youth. Graveen has been the site supervisor at Leopold for three years. Prior to that he was a specialist at Midvale AFTER SCHOOL. He has also worked as a specialist for three summers at Middle School U and one summer for WYC's summer day camp.

"MSU is very much youth oriented," said Graveen. "Kids have an opportunity to learn basic skills and to gain independence."

Andrea McMillen is the new MSU assistant director. She is the site supervisor at the Conrad Elvehjem AFTER SCHOOL program in McFarland. Former MSU director Deanne Lensert will be back to teach bowling and mock court. Former assistant director Casey Hopp will return to teach Running and Fitness and Hiking and Exploring.

4-H Fairs Raise Over \$3700 for Scholarship Fund



Magee AFTER SCHOOL's "Over the Rainbow" skit featured the cowardly lion.

Over \$3700 was raised for the Wisconsin Youth Company scholarship fund by silent auctions at the Dane Region Spring 4-H Fair in Madison and the Waukesha Region Spring 4-H Fair in Waukesha. Forty-six items including baskets of coffees and teas, baby supplies, Bucky Badger paraphernalia and coolers of camping supplies were auctioned at the fair in Madison. The Waukesha fair had 21 offerings including a football signed by members of the Green Bay Packers. The Waukesha silent auction raised \$1590 and the Madison silent auction raised \$2123.

The fairs featured booths with samples of arts and crafts projects done by children attending AFTER SCHOOL during the past school year, a music and drama stage where children performed skits and songs, and booths representing various youth organizations. A light meal was served to families.

The Waukesha fair was April 8 at the Waukesha County Expo Center and the Dane fair was April 29 at the Alliant Energy Center.



Visitors to the Dane Region Spring 4-H Fair check out the silent auction offerings.



The Shorewood AFTER SCHOOL kids made these paper mache animals.

New Community Director Hired

Mike Peltola, Site Supervisor for Yahara AFTER SCHOOL in Stoughton is the new community director. He replaces Lisa Cavern who left in April. He will supervise a cluster of eight AFTER SCHOOL sites, providing support and resources to those programs.

Peltola has been with the organization for seven years as a summer camp counselor, AFTER SCHOOL specialist and site supervisor. He has a degree in health, human performance and recreation from Whitewater. Peltola is married and lives in Stoughton.

Program Coordinator Into Rocketry

There's something about "things that go boom" according to Andrew Stucht, AFTER SCHOOL Program Coordinator. Stucht teaches model rocketry to middle school youth at Wisconsin Youth Company's Middle School U summer program and to Dane Region AFTER SCHOOL kids when he has time.

"There's just something about watching them go up," said Stucht. "It's dramatic."

Stucht has taken his passion for model rocketry and shared it with kids for the past eight years. He first learned about rocketry in high school when he was on a team from West High School in Madison that took part in a national competition that flew rockets with eggs as passengers.

"The idea was to keep the rocket in the air as long as possible and then recover the egg unbroken," said Stucht. Although his team didn't win, Stucht was hooked. Now he teaches his classes every summer and as time allows during the school year.

For kids who have never done rocketry before they start by building simple rockets from kits.

"Workmanship is everything," said Stucht. "If, for example, the fins aren't straight then the

rocket curves or arcs or even tumbles instead of going straight up."

Teaching kids to slow down and craft their rocket carefully and not rush into launching it before it is ready is a big part of the class.

"Shooting something up into the air isn't difficult but getting it back in one piece is," said Stucht.

Safety is also an important factor to be considered.

"I teach them to have respect for the forces they're dealing with," said Stucht.

Rockets are launched using "engines" powered by gunpowder mixed with other chemicals.

Stucht has oversight of the 24 AFTER SCHOOL program sites in Dane County and supervises three community directors. His time in program with kids is limited but when it comes to rocketry he makes the time.

"The creativity of the kids when they design their own rockets really keeps me on my toes," he said, "and doing stuff with them is so rewarding."



Dane Program Director Andrew Stucht with some of the rockets he has built.

Staff Recognition Events Mark End of School Year

AFTER SCHOOL staff in Dane and Waukesha Regions were honored at two events recently. Dane Region staff attended a picnic May 20 catered by Monty's Blue Plate at the Lussier Center at Lake Farm Park on Madison's south side. Long time Shorewood Site Supervisor Barb Townsend and administrative office volunteer Annie Brooks were honored for their service to the organization.

Waukesha Region staff attended a luncheon at the Elm Grove Inn in Elm Grove, WI on June 3.

All staff receive gift cards from Border's Bookstore, Barnes and Noble Bookstore or Visa as a thank you for their service to AFTER SCHOOL.



Celebrating Youth! Gets \$10,000 Grant

Celebrating Youth!, the annual Wisconsin Youth Company (WYC) event to showcase youth talents, has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board.

Wisconsin Arts Board funding comes from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.

“We’re very pleased,” said Caplan. “Our request was fully funded which is very rare.”

Fifteen applicants requested nearly \$125,000 from the arts board. The board was able to award 12 grants totaling \$97,260.

In reviewing the grant comments, the panel praised several aspects of the proposal including the “impressive scope” of the project, the “strong and thoughtfully constructed program book,” and the fact that the event is a good opportunity for youth.

For the past three years the event has had a circus theme. The next Celebrating Youth!, which will be February 14, 2009, will have flight as its theme and will include kites, juggling and aerial dance.

“Our working title is ‘Up in the Air,’” said Caplan.

Also new for the 2009 event is the partnering with the Madison Winter Festival. Celebrating Youth! will be at Monona Terrace and the Madison Winter Festival, which will include skiing and other outdoor snow activities, will be on the Capitol Square.

“These are both family and community oriented events so it makes sense to stage them together,” said Caplan.

Although the event isn’t for seven months organizing is underway. For more information call Ilana Caplan, 608-276-9782, ext. 23.

www.wisconsinyouthcompany.org
Wisconsin Youth Company exists so that the children of Wisconsin benefit from communities that nurture them at a sustainable cost.

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