



# AFTER ALL

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a WISCONSIN YOUTH COMPANY program

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## New Executive Director to Lead WYC

Kay Stevens, the new executive director of Wisconsin Youth Company (WYC), AFTER SCHOOL's parent company, is looking to continue the organization's strong tradition of programs for children and youth.

"This organization was born out of the needs of the community and that's how we've grown," said Stevens. "We want to collaborate with other partners, address unmet needs and make sure we have the highest quality programs."



Kay Stevens

Stevens replaced Nancy Goodell who retired in July after 21 years.

Stevens' professional background includes 32 years with the Girl Scouts. Eighteen of those years were in executive director positions and the most recent as managing director of assets for the Madison based Blackhawk Council.

Stevens has a bachelor's degree in recreation administration from the University of Iowa and masters degree in recreation administration from the University of Minnesota.

"The reason I stayed in Girl Scouts as a child and worked at camps when I was in college was because camp was a safe and fun place to be," said Stevens. "I want our kids in our programs to have that same kind of feeling."

Stevens noted all the positive experiences she had in Girl Scouting growing up.

"I want the same for youth in our programs—a feeling of accomplishment, a sense

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## New Program Director for Dane Region



Eric Koppa

Eric Koppa has been hired as a program director for the Dane Region of AFTER SCHOOL. He will have oversight of eight programs, Franklin, Randall, Elm Lawn, West Middleton, Arboretum, Heritage, Prairie and Mt. Horeb.

Koppa has been involved in education for more than ten years. Most recently he was a Math and English tutor in the Chicago Public Schools. He is also a professional musician and plays with a jazz band that specializes in music of the 20s and 30s. He has also

been a saxophone and clarinet instructor and was a camp counselor in the mid-90s.

"I enjoy having a positive impact on kids and being a role model," said Koppa.

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## New Executive Has Girl Scout Background

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of belonging, the freedom to express who they are and the opportunity to learn leadership skills.”

Stevens has honed her leadership skills over the years. In addition to her work with the Blackhawk Council, she was executive director of a Girl Scout council in Fort Collins, CO for eight years. She saw both councils through major mergers as the Girl Scouts consolidated administrative services as part of a core business strategy. She also worked as training director for North Atlantic Girl Scouts based in Heidelberg, Germany. This office served girls from military families and other American families living in Europe and the Mediterranean.

In the course of her career she’s been involved with programming, membership, property and asset management and volunteer development.

“I had the opportunity to do lots of different things,” she said. “I was kind of a jack-of-all-trades.”

Her many experiences will serve her well as she leads Wisconsin Youth Company, a complex, multi-site, multi program organization.

“We want to look at the changing and emerging needs of young people and see how we can be a part of meeting those needs,” said Stevens. “We want to be the organization of choice when it comes to serving kids.”

Stevens lives in McFarland where she volunteers on the board of the McFarland Food Pantry. She and her three and a half year old dog, Derby, are part of “Dogs on Call” and make regular visits to a Madison nursing home.



**Retiring Executive Director Nancy Goodell received a sundial for her garden from Wisconsin Youth Company Board Vice President Arlington Davis at a reception June 24.**

## New Name for Newsletter

AFTER SCHOOL’s newsletter is now to be called “After All.”

Published quarterly, the newsletter’s new name says it all.

“It’s a kind of play on words that incorporates the word “after” to go with after school and “all” meaning all the news you need,” said Jean Colvin, Communications Director.

Wisconsin Youth Company publishes three additional quarterly newsletters: Whereabouts for the Wander Wisconsin program, Inc. Links, the employee newsletter and the Wisconsin Youth & Family Center (WYFC) newsletter.



## New Dane Program Director

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Originally from Eau Claire, WI, Koppa spent the last ten years living in Chicago.

“I love the land management practices here in Wisconsin that allow large areas of unspoiled nature to be preserved,” said Koppa. “I’m a passionate outdoorsman.”

Currently, Koppa stays with friends in the Madison area or at his cabin near Adams-Friendship during the week and commutes

back to Chicago on the weekends. He still performs with his band there, the Prohibition Orchestra of Chicago. He and his wife and two dogs will make Madison their home soon.

“I’m putting about a thousand miles a week on the car now,” he said.

Koppa has a bachelors degree in fine arts in music performance from Western Michigan University.

## Celebrating Youth! Awarded Three Grants

Wisconsin Youth Company's Celebrating Youth! program has been awarded three grants totaling \$16,000. The largest grant, for \$10,000 is from the Wisconsin Arts Board.

"We were awarded the full amount that we requested which is rare," said Ilana Caplan, Celebrating Youth! Coordinator.

The Wisconsin Arts Board is a state agency that promotes the arts and serves as a cultural resource for Wisconsin communities.

Celebrating Youth! also received \$5,000 from the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission (DCCAC) and \$1,000 from the Madison Arts Commission.

DCCAC was created to foster public participation in local arts and historical activities. Much of this funding will support local artists who will run workshops in the months leading up to Celebrating Youth! aimed at creating performance pieces to present at the event.



"It's quite exciting," said Caplan. "We received these grants because the funders believe the program is well administered and serves a broad audience."

Celebrating Youth! is a free annual event sponsored by Wisconsin Youth Company to showcase the talents and interests of area youth. The next one will be Jan. 31, 2010 at Monona Terrace. It features four stages with youth performances a visual art exhibit,

booths of organizations and businesses that serve youth and families and many hands-on activities. This year's theme is "Weaving the Web."

"The grant money helps fund artists who work with youth creating performances for the event and who lead activity areas where families can participate in large scale art projects or create something to take home with them," said Caplan.

For example, Elizabeth Walker and Christine Thompson, local textile artists, will facilitate a group weaving project to create a wall hanging that will be displayed at Celebrating Youth! in future years, as well as smaller braiding projects each person can take home with them.

The funding also helps pay for the use of Monona Terrace.

"That allows us to have the event in a warm and inviting space in the heart of downtown Madison," said Caplan.

Caplan has coordinated Celebrating Youth! for the past two years. The Jan. 31st event will be the 11th time it has been held. It draws upwards of 5,000 people. For more information visit [www.celebratingyouth.org](http://www.celebratingyouth.org) or call 276-9782, ext. 23.



**SAVE *the* DATE** **CELEBRATING Youth!**

**January 31, 2010**

Where: Monona Terrace      Theme: "Weaving the Web"

## New Site Opened at Stoughton's Sandhill School

AFTER SCHOOL opened a new site at Sandhill School in Stoughton this fall. The organization previously had a program at Yahara School which is now a private school. That program averaged about 15 children a day. The Sandhill site is averaging about 40 children a day.

Sandhill was used as a middle school and now houses kindergarten through fifth grade. The AFTER SCHOOL program meets in the cafetorium.

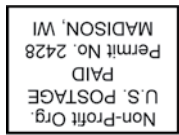
"It's a nice space," said Cassie Mielke, site supervisor. "The bathrooms are just off the play area which is convenient."

Children also have access to a large playground with climbing structures and an outdoor space.

AFTER SCHOOL operates two other program sites in Stoughton at Fox Prairie and Kegonsa Schools.



*Kids play on the climbing equipment (top) during outdoor time on the playground at Sandhill. Left, dramatic play is fun with a tent.*



## Expanding Programming, Adding resources Are Priorities

There will be an emphasis on expanding programming and resources at AFTER SCHOOL sites this year.

“Our programs are extremely high quality here in Waukesha,” said Waukesha Division Director CindySue Nielsen. “We want to take it to the next level.”

Nielsen said her staff will be emphasizing opportunities for children in the areas of science, foreign language and diversity.

“Our children are ‘students of the world’,” she said. “Their world starts with their school and their AFTER SCHOOL and we want to help them move beyond that to understand the wider world.”

Nora Bergeon-Capps, Dane Division Director, noted that the programs would

be taking advantage of the many resources available through 4-H. All children enrolled in AFTER SCHOOL’s club program for third through fifth grade are also enrolled in 4-H.

“There are tons and tons of resources,” said Capps. “Almost anything you can imagine that kids would like to learn about we can pursue through 4-H.”

Capps said they would also take advantage of 4-H training for staff so they can learn projects to teach the children and 4-H sponsored field trips to places like farms and cheese factories.

Both regional directors said they wanted to emphasize community service too.

“Part of our mission as an organization is to

help kids connect with their communities,” Capps noted, “and learn to give back.”

AFTER SCHOOL operates 23 programs in Dane County and 15 in Waukesha County.



*Eamon Montgomery, right, specialist at Sandhill, helps Kyle, 8, with his homework.*

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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