

# INCA

# INFORMER

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.



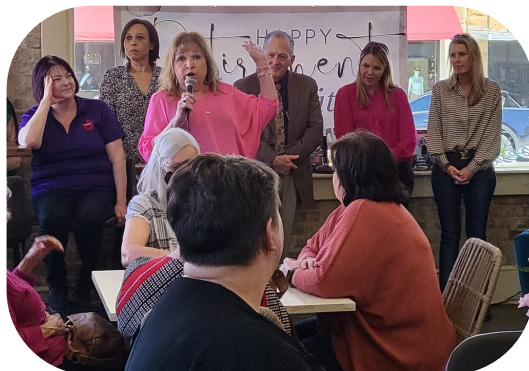
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | 1Q 2023

**INCA Community  
Services, Inc.**

## Celebrating 25 Years of Service

### LaQuita Thornley Retires as INCA Executive Director

On Friday March 31st, friends, family, colleagues, and community members gathered in Atoka to celebrate the career and impact of LaQuita Thornley. Attendees from all across the state showed their gratitude and appreciation of her 25 year career at INCA and in the Community Action network. LaQuita is a shining example of the Community Action spirit, and has been committed to growing and evolving INCA to meet the ever evolving needs of our community, initiating and spearheading many successful and impactful programs and initiatives during her time with INCA. When asked her favorite thing about working in Community Action Thornley responded, "The ability to help someone help themselves." And she has, she has helped improve the lives of so many and our community through her insightful and caring leadership.



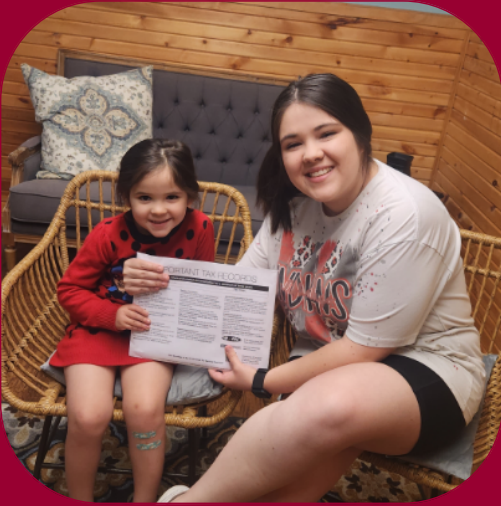
- 1 Monthly Highlight**
- 2 Community Services Highlights**
- 3 RSVP Highlight**
- 4 Head Start/EHS Highlight**
- 5 JAMM Transit Highlight**
- 6 Jobs/ Looking Ahead**

HELPING PEOPLE.  
CHANGING LIVES.



(844)462-2457  
**INCACAA.ORG**





*"INCA helped  
our family."*

## Providing Tax Assistance

### VITA Provides Community with FREE Tax Preparation

During the Tax Season, (February – April) the VITA program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$60,000 or less, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. Our IRS certified VITA volunteers provide basic income tax return services without charge, ensuring 100% of the tax refund goes directly to the customer.

When tax season arrives, volunteers with INCA's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program dedicate themselves to preparing hundreds of tax returns for South-Central Oklahoma residents in need. With the help of many community partners, these IRS-certified volunteers return much needed dollars to our communities and save our co-workers, neighbors, and friends thousands of dollars in tax preparation fees.

INCA helps prepare tax returns free of charge for low-income families in Johnston, Atoka, Marshall, and Murray Counties. A 16-hour training course is provided for anyone interested in learning to be a Tax Preparer at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. Volunteers are also needed to serve as Greeters at the tax site. No formal training or skills are needed to be a greeter. We also need Interpreters onsite to help translate to non-English speaking clients.

If you are interested in becoming a VITA volunteer for next year's tax season, contact Wanda at (580)371-2352.

## Providing Clothing Assistance in Murray County

On April 13th the Murray County office held an impromptu "Clothing Rummage" outside the office. This event was used to help reduce the crowding in the clothing room, while helping the community.

25 Families (93 people) we served. 18 families were from Sulphur, 6 families were from Davis, and 1 family was from Mill Creek





## Feeding Our Community

### RSVP Adds Produce Pop-ups to Address Food Insecurity

Each month, with the help of the United Way grant, AmeriCorps INCA-RSVP and its volunteers serve over 360 low-income seniors with 30 pounds of shelf-stable food through the Commodity Senior Food Program (CSFP). The CSFP works to improve the health of low-income persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods. This valued food program provides a monthly food package tailored for older adults that helps stretch food dollars and adds nutritious foods to their diet for good health. But what was missing? By visiting monthly with these senior recipients and other community members and asking what other needs they may have, we discovered one common thread between younger and older adults. There is a desperate need and critical lack of access to fresh, affordable fruits and vegetables in the rural areas served by INCA-RSVP and United Way of South Central Oklahoma. In response to this missing link, INCA RSVP has partnered with other Regional Food Bank Pantry partners to bring the **'Fresh Market Oasis' Mobile Produce Pop-Up Stand** to supplement our rural produce deserts in Southern Oklahoma.

As of April 12th, **over 800 families** in southern Oklahoma have benefitted from fresh produce provided by RSVP Volunteers and there are currently 4 to 6 pop ups a month planned through 2023 in the nine Oklahoma counties that INCA-RSVP serves. RSVP volunteers help distribute the fresh fruits and vegetables to any family in need no matter age, income or status. Through the Oasis Pop-Up program, they hope to tackle various socio-economic issues such as food disparity, food insecurity and food deserts because they believe that one's access to healthy food options should not dictate their ability to enjoy a healthy diet. INCA-RSVP volunteers are ON A MISSION to empower families and individuals and together the **Oasis in the desert** has started small and is quickly growing into a movement much larger!

Thank you to all the volunteers who have given their countless time and energy to make this a reality. If you are interested in volunteering for a Produce Pop-Up in your area, please contact Shawna Latham, RSVP Project Director at (580)371-2352 ext 277 or email [s.latham@incacaa.org](mailto:s.latham@incacaa.org) to sign up. We need YOU!

Since its kick-off  
RSVP staff and volunteers  
have hosted the following  
**10 Produce Pop-Ups:**

February 14th - Tishomingo  
84 families served

February 17th - Mill Creek  
55 families served

February 24th - Butcher Pen  
48 families served

March 7th - Madill  
110 families served

March 10th - Tishomingo  
99 families served

March 24th - Mannsville  
61 families served

March 27th - Lebanon  
57 families served

March 28th - Wapanucka  
59 families served

April 10th - Sulphur  
86 families served

April 12th - Davis  
141 families served

**Over 800  
served!**



## Welcome to the INCA Family

Excited to have the newest members of the Head Start/Early Head Start Management Team



### AMANDA CRAMER

#### FAMILY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER/ADMIN ASSISTANT

My name is Amanda Cramer. I graduated from Northeastern State University with a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. I continued my education, graduating with a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction and then completed a Masters degree for Educational Leadership. I started my career as a Head Start teacher, some of that time was with INCA. I continued my career in education with Ardmore City Schools, 15 years teaching preschool, kindergarten, and serving as an instructional coach. The last 5 years, I spent in administration as an Assistant Principal. I am excited to be back at INCA! My heart is in providing assistance that maximizes a family's well-being and in the academic, social, and emotional growth of children. My new role as Family Engagement Manager/Admin Assistant will provide me the opportunity to do what I love.

### LORI TURMAN

#### EDUCATION MANAGER

My name is Lori Turman. I was born and raised in the McAlester Oklahoma area. I have two wonderful children and one beautiful granddaughter, whom I am a proud mother and grandmother. I started my career in Early Childhood during the Summer of 1999. I worked for Ki Bois Head Start as a part time Special Needs worker. I then went to work for Choctaw Nation Head Start in 2000 as a Head Start Teacher. I learned a lot during my time with the Choctaw Nation and grew for almost 13 years. I obtained my Bachelor degree in Applied Behavioral Sciences with an emphasis in Early Childhood and Psychology in December of 2012. Throughout my career in Early Childhood Development, I have been a presenter for Choctaw Nation Head Start's, Directors Conference for Native Americans, OCCC Child Care Conference, NCS Child Care Conference, Choctaw Nation Childcare Assistance Annual Conference, Staff Family Childcare Network and many trainings for libraries, school staff and students to work with children. I came back full circle where my heart lies with Head Start and I am very excited to be a part of the INCA Head Start Team.



### EDITH "EDIE" SAUNDERS

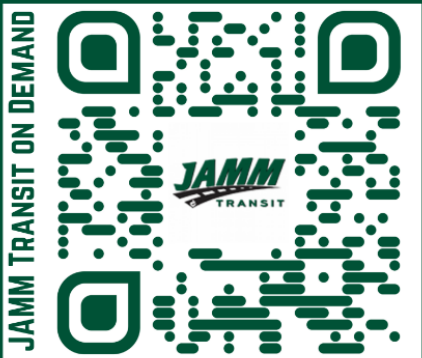
#### FAMILY SERVICES MANAGER

Some may remember me as Edie Montgomery from several years ago as the HPRP Coordinator until my grant ended 10 years ago but now am reincarnated as a Family Services Manager. In the meantime, I received my degree, a Bachelor's in Business – Organizational Innovation with an emphasis in Marketing. I worked as a Domestic Violence Advocate for the Family Shelter of Southern Oklahoma for a year and a half, and an Adult Protective Services Specialist for DHS for almost 9 years. My husband Ron and I have 5 children, 12 Grandchildren and a beautiful great granddaughter. Yes, I am a proud Nana and Gigi.





## NEED A RIDE?



Scan QR code to schedule your ride  
(844) 462-2457 | Serving Johnston, Atoka,  
Marshall, & Murray Counties

1

DOWNLOAD

## JAMM ON DEMAND

## Download, Setup, &amp; Login. It's THAT Easy...

Have you heard? JAMM is ready to embrace a multi-modal future. How will we do this? By integrating new technology and existing transportation services into one. A system that will provide real-time information for riders including bus locations, departures, and trip-planning. JAMM is going MOBILE(cellular that is)!

Riding with us just keeps getting easier! By integrating our new JAMM on DEMAND APP with our vehicle dispatch software we are putting YOU in the driver's seat. You will experience ease of use, flexibility to manage your trips, and the ability to view trip details all with the click of a button.

Because our vehicles use GPS, YOU will be able to plan your trips conveniently and get real-time updates. Traveling has never been faster or simpler, so come ride with us!

Open iTunes if you have an iPhone or open GOOGLE PLAY STORE if you have an ANDROID, or scan the QR CODE. Search JAMM TRANSIT by tapping on the magnifying glass icon. To download and install, simply tap the CLOUD ICON button on an APPLE device, or the Install button on an ANDROID device.

Tap the SIGN UP button. Enter your first and last name and then, tap NEXT.

From this point you are given a phone number to finish setting up your account but this feature will be changed shortly to an automatic enrollment.

2

SETUP &  
LOGIN

3

BOOK  
A TRIP

To choose an ITINERARY, you allow the app to use your location, by choosing ALLOW ONCE or ALLOW WHILE USING APP. Then you can select the PICK-UP LOCATION. Tap the PICK-UP MENU, and it will show your STORED LOCATION or the RECENTLY USED ADDRESSES.

Repeat the previous process to select the Drop-off Location by tapping the DROP-OFF MENU. Now choose the DATE and HOUR for your trip. Then tap NEXT. Once you've filled out your trip, you can calculate your fare. If everything looks good, tap BOOK TRIP on the bottom and your reservation will be sent to our dispatching system. You'll receive a confirmation with an opportunity to book a return trip.





We must open the doors of opportunity. But we must also equip our people to walk through those doors.

— Lyndon B. Johnson



## OPEN POSITIONS

### ADMIN

Human Resource  
Coordinator/Corporate Secretary

### JAMM TRANSIT

Flex Drivers  
Transit Administrative Assistant

### RAVE

DLS II  
HTS I  
HTS III  
HTS V  
Homemaker  
Agency Companion  
Workshop Slot for Client

### HEAD START

Practice Based Coach  
Floaters  
Food Tech  
Teacher  
Teacher Assistant  
EHS Teacher  
EHS Caregiver

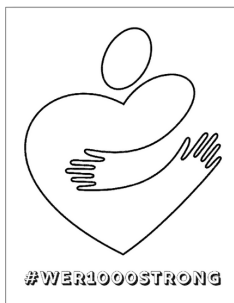
Learn more &  
Apply Online  
[INCACAA.ORG/JOBS](http://INCACAA.ORG/JOBS)



## Looking forward...

### May is Community Action Month

Show us your Community Action spirit by snapping a selfie with the selfie sign, or coloring a huggy heart and sending us a picture. We are Community Action! [communityactionpartnership.com/cam-2023/](http://communityactionpartnership.com/cam-2023/)



### VISIT INCA ON SOCIAL MEDIA



## *INCA's Mission*

*INCA Community Services, Inc. shall operate programs to alleviate the causes of poverty and enhance the public health and welfare by opening to everyone the opportunity to work, have safe and affordable housing, transportation, training and education, and live in decency and dignity.*

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