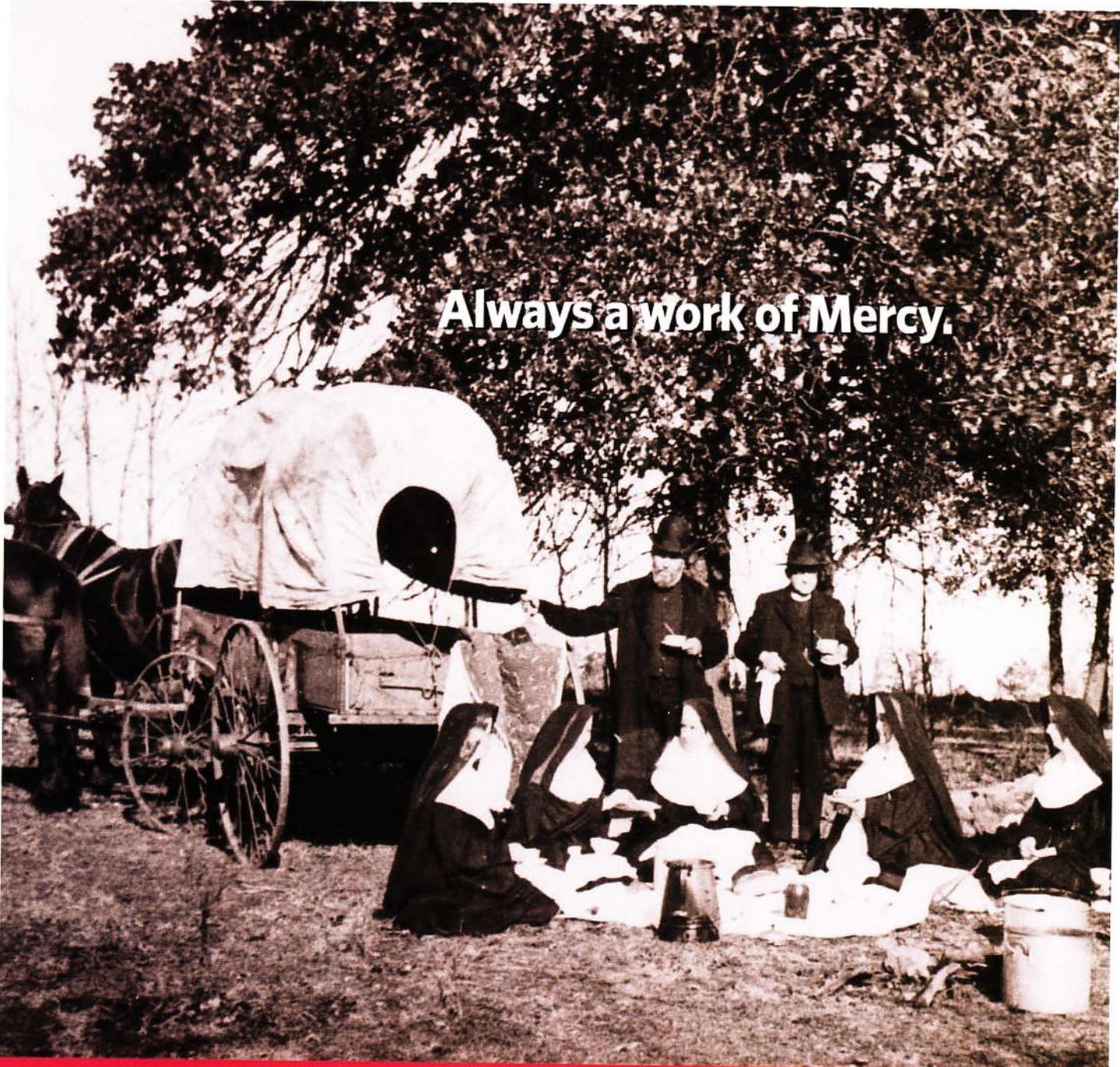


 **outland**
2014



Possibilities
Connecting People. Changing Communities.

OPENING DOORS



Always a work of Mercy.

Five years before the land run of 1889, Sisters of Mercy began teaching in Indian Territory and providing informal health care. In 1947, they purchased Oklahoma City General Hospital, continuing a tradition of caring begun before statehood. From our earliest days, the Sisters have listened and responded to the needs of the community. Today, the healing hand of Mercy serves communities across Oklahoma with hospitals, clinics and physicians.

The healing ministry that began more than a century ago is part of a major health ministry serving millions of people across seven states. Medicine has changed dramatically, but our dedication to the community hasn't. We are honored to celebrate our heritage with the Sisters of Mercy.

Caring for you is a work of Mercy



Open the Door to Possibilities

Do you remember a time when someone performed an act of generosity for you that didn't seem like a big deal at the time, yet it had a real impact on your life? One simple act in our world of bigger, better and newer may seem insignificant or even a waste of time. But if your goal is to climb the highest mountain, it is important that you take the first step. The first step may seem very small compared to how far it is to reach the summit. Yet without the first step, a journey never begins. If you think back to an earlier time in your life, it may not be hard for you to think of someone who said something to you, or did something with you, that opened a door of possibilities that changed your life.

The legendary basketball coach John Wooden had his players spend hours learning to tie their shoes correctly. As you read how Coach Wooden coached, he tells you that if his players practiced small disciplines to the best of their abilities each day, they would be successful in life. What difference did the little acts like tying shoes make? Coach Wooden won 10 national championships, a feat that has never been repeated in over 30 years. In the 1930's in India, Mahatma Gandhi was upset because there was a tax so heavy on salt that the people who mined salt could not afford it. Gandhi decided to walk from his home all the way to the site where salt was mined. He started walking with about 75 people following him. By the time he reached the Indian mine, there were over 60,000 people with him. First steps are taken because a dream is allowed to foster in our mind. Through a series of small possibilities where people offer generosity, encouragement and instruction, people are able walk through the door to a world full of possibilities.

Each action *Possibilities* takes is designed as a springboard for people to step into a world of possibilities they have only dreamt of in the past. Our actions are values based and are intentional acts designed to open doors to what is possible for individuals and communities. What difference do these intentional acts make? People who were once afraid to speak in public now lead local community groups. People who were frustrated by a lack of economic opportunities start their own businesses and non-profit organizations. People who have had their property burned to the ground from arson rebuild beautiful new community structures and partnerships along the way. Children who were afraid of bullies and violence gain confidence from older adults willing to help and mentor them.

While the tools for community work we share with our partners are consistent, our acts are not a cookie cut formula where we do the same for each of our partners. Sometimes we gently nurture, other times we are firm; we reach out and walk through the doors with our partners. Each door of possibilities our partners walk through is unique to their journey in life.

What we do is facilitate community transformations.

We help people to go through doors to find their own possibilities for themselves and their communities. The impact of these steps has grown each year; the work of our program participants over the last 11 years reaches 50,000 people annually. You may ask what changes can happen because of one simple act. Our answer to you is to think about what kind of doors have been opened in your own life thanks to seemingly simple acts.



Possibilities

Connecting People. Changing Communities.

Message from the President

Much uncertainty remains regarding the current status of our economy. This continues to be a significant hurdle to overcome for virtually all not-for-profit organizations all over the country. Oklahoma agencies are seeing the impact in our community support, in spite of our comparatively lower cost of living. Our staff perseveres in working through these challenges that they must deal with, and has done even more to think outside of traditional approaches to support our mission.

It is precisely for those reasons that Possibilities *must*, now more than ever, maintain the maximum level of effort in pursuing its highly successful community building work. Hard economic times can be detrimental not only from a lack of funding, but in the general demoralization of people and communities. It is much easier to conduct such efforts when economic pressures are lower; it is quite another circumstance to encourage and motivate community partners in our current economic climate. Oklahoma City communities need the tools, training and moral support to lead their neighborhoods, schools, communities through improvement initiatives especially given today's challenges.

Creating lasting change is the key mission of Possibilities, Inc. As would be expected, our program by design is long-term in nature. The most critical use of the funding received is deployed into supporting community work and projects that are underway and showing successful results, as well as supporting current projects for our latest community innovators. It is this support that allows community changes to become permanent, rather than requiring assistance from various charitable organizations again and again.

So many of you have faithfully and generously devoted your time and financial support to our organization over the years, and for that we are extremely grateful. Please join in the continued support of the permanent positive changes resulting from the work being done by Possibilities, so that we can stay on the path of constant improvement for Oklahoma City and its neighborhoods, schools and communities."

Lucy Fritts

American Fidelity Assurance Company
President, Board of Directors



POSSIBILITIES, INC.

621 NW 20th St. • Oklahoma City, OK • 73103 ❖ PO Box 60254 • Oklahoma City, OK • 73146
405.525.3131 ❖ www.possibilitiesinc.org



Values & Principles

Dignity

We believe in the worth of each person.

Participation and Inclusiveness

We believe local people have the solutions to local problems & every person is a part of the solution.

Growth

We believe success and failure give opportunity to learn.

Responsibility

We believe people support what they help create.

Service

We start where people are and join their journey.

Trust

We believe people function best when they feel safe.

Integrity

We believe our success depends on our actions matching our words.

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* Published in the August 2010 issue. The 12% Letter is a monthly publication of Stansberry & Associates Investment Research. Editor Tom Dyson researched all 14,730 stocks traded on the United States stock exchanges to find the best compounding stocks in America.



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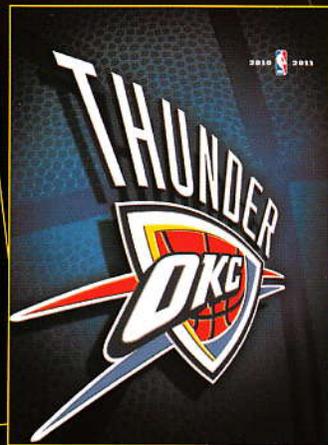
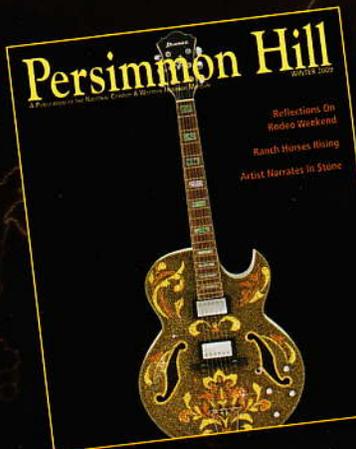
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This is Possibilities



Possibilities, Inc. invites you to discover a unique group of people working together to create positive community changes in greater Oklahoma City and beyond. Strong businesses, families and schools within safe neighborhoods create thriving urban communities. Since 1995, *Possibilities* has facilitated citizen-managed projects from within local communities. Addressing issues such as poverty, isolation, dependency, struggling schools, crime and deterioration, *Possibilities* work is critical for a vibrant City. *Possibilities* engages citizens at the grassroots level to leverage the power of cooperation, creativity and community.

Possibilities work achieves lasting improvements in peoples' lives, not quick fixes dependent on outside assistance. To create permanent community transformations, *Possibilities* teaches skills that develop local leadership and strengthen the ability of citizens to solve their own problems. *Possibilities* community work achieves physical, social and economic improvements—ultimately improving quality of life. *Possibilities* is recognized as a model program by Tufts University among only 31 acclaimed sustainable communities initiatives across the nation, and was recognized in 2009 as a ONE Award finalist by the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits. *Possibilities* is a United Way partner agency.

Possibilities core program is *Possibilities Innovation Program (PIP), Engaging and Transforming Communities from Within*. PIP is a one of a kind, annual, yearlong program that combines training, practice, mentoring, coaching and support to carry out grassroots projects. Program participants, known as Community Innovators, transform local communities. Working where people live, work, learn, worship and play, Community Innovators impact around 50,000 people annually achieving safer neighborhoods, stronger families, community schools and economic growth. A few examples of how Community Innovators transform communities: truancy counseling, educational programs for children who are home alone, quarterly neighborhood clean-ups, volunteer crime patrols and community building events to promote connection and safety. Community Innovators accomplish transformations themselves, ensuring that changes last and are self supporting.

Mission:

To strengthen the ability of people to work together for community change.





American Fidelity Assurance Company (AFA) is proud to serve our 1.1 million Customers. We have been providing insurance and financial security solutions for almost 50 years. We are proud to support educational and civic projects that strengthen our community. These are some of the reasons FORTUNE magazine has recognized AFA as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For in America for seven consecutive years.

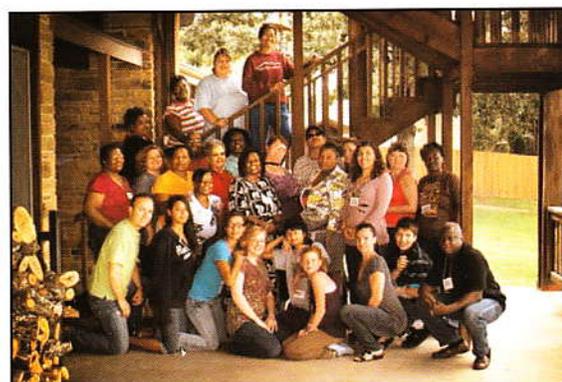
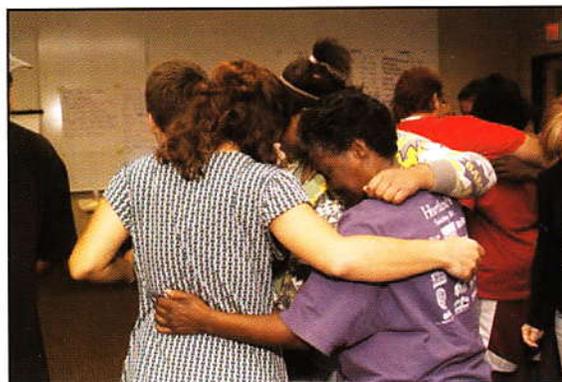
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Possibilities Innovation Program

Engaging and Transforming Communities from Within

(Formerly Known As Camp Possibilities)



Great transformations occur through connections we have with others. *Possibilities Innovation Program* participants, known as *Community Innovators*, come from all walks of life and share the dream for a better community. They make their dreams a reality by participating in the yearlong *Possibilities Innovation Program* to increase their confidence and skills to work with others to create community transformations. An opening retreat kicks off the program where our *Community Innovators* are immersed in *Possibilities* tools and learn to base their community work on a set of values and principles. After the retreat, these *Community Innovators* attend trainings and participate in practice sessions that last through January, putting the tools they have been taught to use. Beginning in February, *Community Innovators* assess their communities and decide on a community project. Throughout the spring, they plan, implement and evaluate their projects, working in neighborhoods, schools, houses of faith and businesses throughout greater Oklahoma City and beyond. Join us in thanking our *Community Innovators* who have the courage to explore the possibilities for their communities through *Possibilities Innovation Program*! We can't wait to see what innovative transformations are in store for our communities this year...

"Go to the people: Live with them, Learn from them, love them. Start with what they know, build with what they have. When the work is done and the task is accomplished, the people will say 'We have done this ourselves.'" – Lao Tzu

Cultural Walk Opens Doors

An exercise called the Cultural Walk has turned into one of the most powerful exercises for our participants in the last seven years. The purpose of the exercise is to allow participants an opportunity to expand their view of the world through experiencing perspectives different than their own. For some this exercise is life changing, for others it is affirming and enlightening.

No matter where we are in the world, we are raised with certain values that fit into our own frames of reference. It would be impossible to process information instantly with everything new that comes into our path. To make it manageable, our brain places information into categories called frames. For instance, perhaps when you meet a man in a red suit with a white beard, you might put that person into a frame we call Santa Claus. No matter what the situation, we realize this person fits in our frame called Santa Claus.

Issues with framing come up when we take our frames of reference as the absolute truth. All of our frames are subjective. And even though it may be a worthy frame of reference, it is still subjective. When we see information that doesn't fit into our frames, it causes us to reframe. Thus if you see a man in a red suit who isn't Santa Claus and is, in fact, your doctor, you then have to change your frame.

Each of us is unique and the ways we interact with others are different from each other, especially in today's society. If we lived in a remote village somewhere, we could be sure that everyone has most of the same frames of reference. Today many of us live by one group, worship with another, go to school with another group and work with yet another totally different group. We are constantly involved with others whose frames of reference are completely different than ours. When one person insists that others adhere to their frame of reference, it causes conflict.

The Cultural Walk is designed to give participants a chance to listen and interact with others whose frames of reference are different than their own. Some of us have families where everyone has graduated from college; others have never had a family member graduate. Some people have visited people who are in prison; some have never been to a jail. Some have never had divorce in their families; others have had generations of family divorce. There is no wrong or right to our frames. The more we are able to see the world from different perspectives, the easier it is for us to adjust our frames of reference and understand those around us.

If you have ever been to a foreign country, you understand that your frames of reference have to change or you don't survive very well. Even something as simple as using an electrical socket is different in different countries. We have to reframe our thoughts just to function on a day to day basis. A great example of reframing is the television show Undercover Boss. It's a show where the boss of a big company goes undercover in his or her own company and works with workers who have no idea they are working with the boss. When they begin the process, they have a certain frame of what the company is like. After they spend a week with employees, they have a reframe of their company. They never see their work in the same way as they did before. In all cases, they come away with a better product. This is the heart of what the Cultural Walk is about.

Letting people spend time together and sharing their experiences of the world they live in changes everyone involved for the better. The Cultural Walk is about going through a process of learning to see people from different perspectives. If we are to work and live together peacefully and effectively, we cannot insist that everyone else live by our own frame of reference. It is a tough tightrope to walk keeping true to our own values, yet valuing others and their views. We hope you can experience the cultural walk sometime; it will be a great chance for you to reframe some views about those who live, work, worship, learn and play around you and to have others change their frames of how they relate to you.



Look who's Opening Doors with Possibilities

Noemy Magaña



Noemy is a student at ASTEC High School and began participating with *Possibilities* in 2009. Noemy is a busy high school student that makes time for all kinds of community work. The doors that opened for Noemy:

Possibilities has impacted me by improving my social skills and making me more outspoken. I like that *Possibilities* makes you get out of your box. I enjoy helping other people and

like that people support my ideas at *Possibilities*. I get to put my ideas in action to make the community a better place. I think the staff is great and is always there to help me out. I feel close with the other people that come to *Possibilities*- they're always with you. We've got each other's backs. I love the program and plan on participating with *Possibilities* for a long time. I would like to graduate college to become a good nurse so I can help out more people.

Jackie Riddle



Jackie is a Lead Teacher at Oklahoma City Educare. Jackie and her husband James began participating with *Possibilities* in 2009, and she was a part of *Possibilities* Leadership Academy for teachers at Educare.

The doors that opened for Jackie: The first door I saw opened was how many people worked in the community and how they all had great leadership skills. The other impact was in management. I have been a manager before and I saw a lot of supervisors who really didn't want to be supervisors. This made me tentative in my own management approach. During the Leadership Academy, I learned that it is okay to be upfront and give constructive criticism. In the past, there was tension and conflict among some peers. After doing personality assessments, it helped us to understand each other. It has helped our team a great deal. I enjoy getting to know the staff of *Possibilities*; they are a great group of leaders.

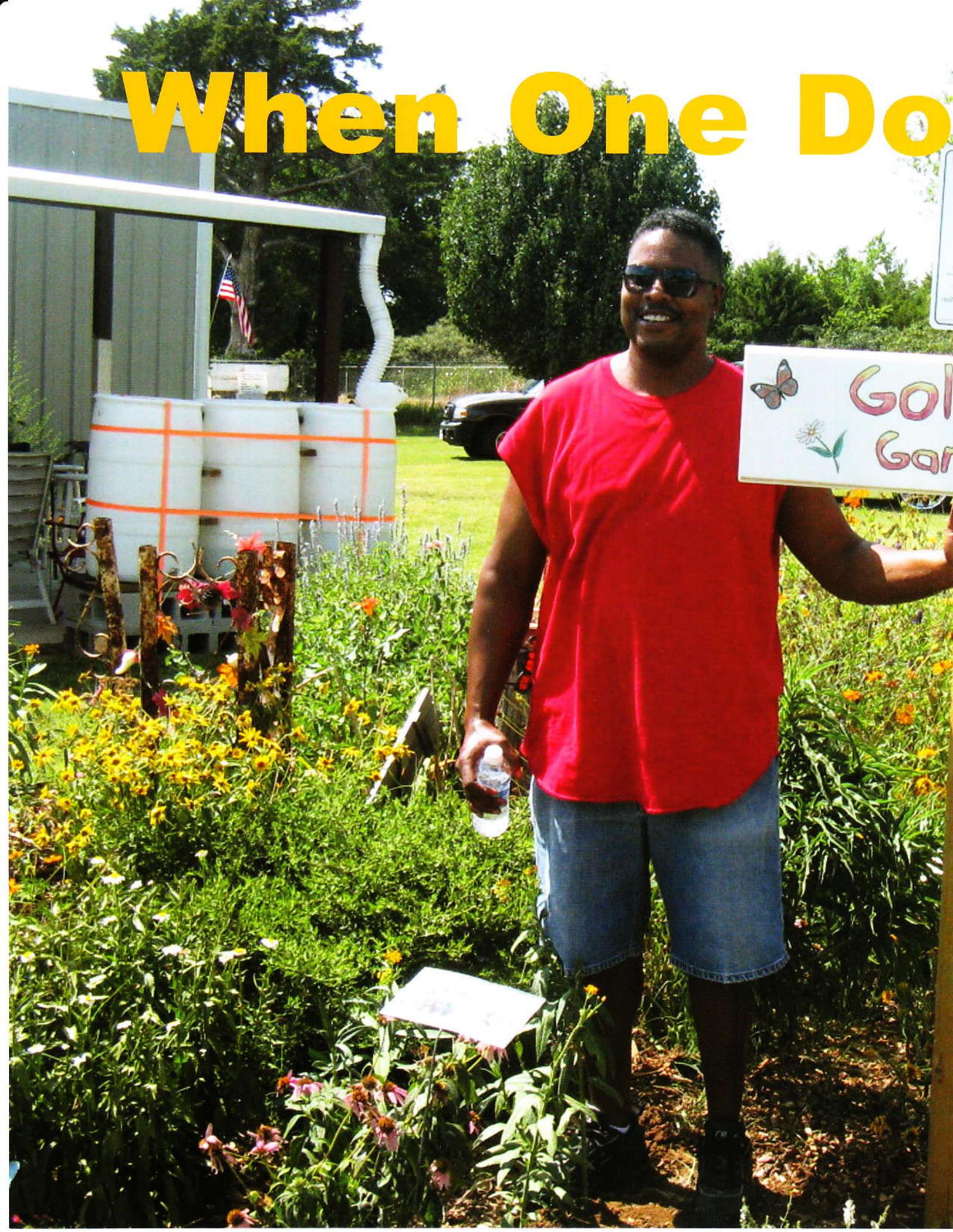
THE TASTING ROOM



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When One Do



or Closes...



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dens

A hand-drawn illustration of a monarch butterfly and a daisy flower on a stem with leaves.

Have you ever heard the saying when one door closes, another opens? You may remember Joel Bradford's work in the local Carverdale neighborhood and in the Jerusalem community near Washington, Oklahoma that was featured in last year's magazine. When Joel Bradford's community center burned to the ground, it looked like his dreams for the community center on the historical site had died. He dreamed of a place where groups of all sizes, races, and types could have community gatherings and keep a piece of his history alive.

At this time last year, community members had come together and raised enough money to build the foundation and frame of a new community building in Jerusalem. Today the structure is complete and has been expanded to include several flower gardens, a water system and a 30-foot long caterpillar beckoning to travelers along Highway 74B. In fact, there have been multiple events held there, including the annual Monarch Festival celebrating the fall migration of Monarch butterflies in October that attracted several hundred visitors. The building is paid for and Mr. Bradford's dream of having a center that is used by community members and celebrates the history of his community has come to fruition.

Mr. Bradford has always wanted people to visit his community to see the cemetery he lovingly takes care of, to pick the greens he plants every year and to hear the history of his community. However, in the past he has struggled to generate wide-spread interest. Who knew that it would take a door closing with his first building burning down from a fire for community members from many communities to rally and make the community center their own? A door opened and it became bigger than the dream he initially had. In fact, when people ask him if they have found the cause of the fire in which arson was suspected, he replies that he thinks it was a miracle. A miracle that has rallied several neighboring towns and communities to become involved in sustaining his legacy and the historic community he loves.

Possibilities Opens Doors

Participation and inclusiveness are principles of *Possibilities* that are heartfelt to me. After leaving Oklahoma City as a child, I returned to my old neighborhood as an adult to challenge that saying “you can never go home again”. I found a church, a lovely wife, and an active neighborhood. Doors had really opened for me. But I was to learn many more *Possibilities* were at hand.

Through Douglas Edgemere Neighbors, my neighborhood association, I met Nancy, who introduced me to *Possibilities, Inc.* Our association had begun to combat a couple of threats; we were able to engage with them and find compromises. Because all participated and included others’ needs, we found agreeable solutions, which led to more regular communication, changing from reactive to proactive. Since then, several projects with multiple stakeholders have improved the park, and our neighborhood association is growing in friendships and activities. I was visiting with neighbors recently and there must have been 100 people in the park - soccer and football practices, kids in the playground, and adults visiting at the gazebo. No one had ever seen so many people there, and everyone was having a great time!

We found that many neighborhood associations were feeling isolated. Consequently, The Near Northwest Regional Alliance was born five years ago to coordinate matters of

mutual concern. The broader community is much more diverse, which has led to newer ideas, not division. When we’ve had issues, such as construction, traffic, and utility realignments, our larger numbers have helped further our interests. Most exciting, however, is a GreenWalks plan that was created to install limited interior sidewalks in our four square mile area to connect our 13 neighborhoods, nine schools and four business districts. It will provide a safe route for school children and walkers, connect neighbors, promote local business, fight crime, and help schools return as a keystone in community. We have our first funding – a \$250,000 grant!



Although the GreenWalks plan will take many years to complete, it has already started to open more doors through networking. Edgemere Elementary, threatened by budget cuts, needs community support; the school is gaining more volunteers to read with young students. We now have a voice with the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments about alternative, sustainable transportation. When someone needs a hand, we have better communication channels. Things are coming full circle. New doors continue to open because our actions are largely based on participation and inclusiveness, principles emphasized to me for many years by *Possibilities*.

– Jon Coussens, PIP Graduate

WITH ALL YOUR POWER



WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

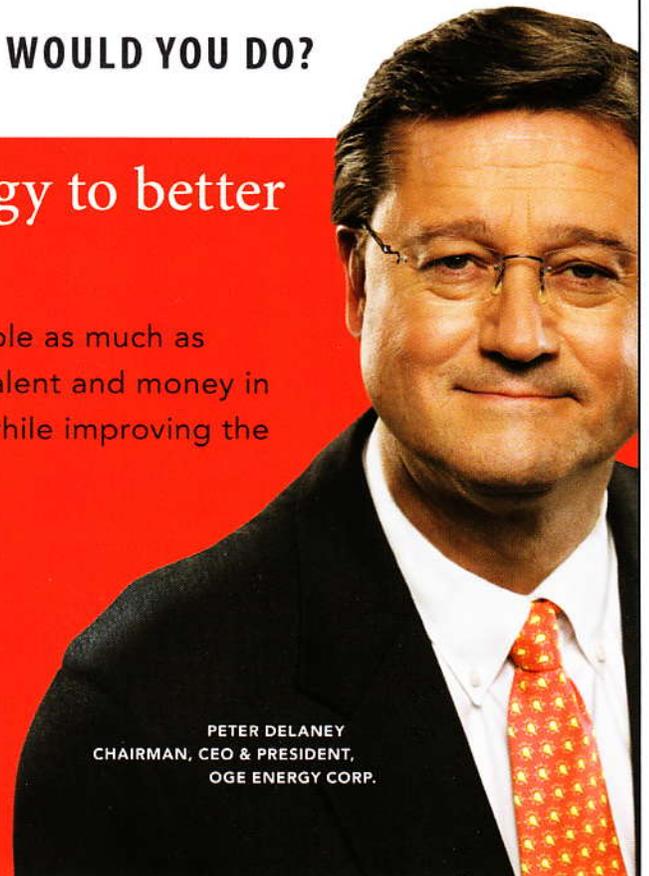
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Possibilities Opens Doors



Possibilities Inc. has a flair for opening doors and connecting people, communities and organizations. These doors lead to opportunities. *Possibilities* provides training, resources, and support that inspires relationship building, leadership development and responsibility for neighborhood growth. These collective actions are instru-

mental in indentifying concerns and achieving reasonable results.

Opening doors is a gift of generosity and skill. It takes talent to mesh the raw energy of community effort and volunteers with all the pieces that influence the neighborhood such as government, businesses, media, education, faith based organizations. *Possibilities* manages these skills with precision and accuracy, yet they stay grounded in respectfulness. It takes commitment to work many projects with different levels of success, persevere and justly recognize it all as growth.

It takes aptitude and dedication to gather diverse groups of individuals at a common table, to break bread and have an open medium. It demonstrates consideration and tolerance. This conscious effort effectively leads to thought-provoking discussions and awareness.

Possibilities Inc. has had a positive impact throughout Oklahoma City's neighborhoods. As a member of the 2009-2010 *Possibilities Innovators Program (PIP)*, the team along with *Possibilities* provided support to the South Creston Hills & White Orchard Neighborhood Association with a **Party in the Park Membership Drive**. This activity was influential in bolstering the neighborhood to build growth and participation. Likewise additional neighbors are currently participating in *PIP* for 2010-2011.

As *Possibilities* opens doors, it also weaves together a fabric that unites people and resources. When you learn to ride a bike, you usually have a helper until you are peddling of your own accord. They do not leave you as you make your way. They encourage you as you learn to balance and ride with skill. That is *Possibilities Inc.* giving you the chance to make a difference in your community. I thank you *Possibilities Inc.* for your dedication and for a job well done.

– Patricia Mays Caddell, PIP Graduate

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The People's Network

A Special Gathering



The People's Network is an opportunity to meet *Possibilities* partners hard at work in our communities. Neighborhoods, schools, non-profit organizations and other communities from all over Oklahoma City come together once a month to share a meal and talk about what is happening in our communities. People from all cultures, ages and economic backgrounds gather for People's Network. Great collaboration between community volunteers is built as people come to share ideas, successes and lessons learned, and find motivation to continue tackling tough community challenges. It is also a great place to find support for community projects; *Possibilities* partners often volunteer in many communities around the city. Join us for dinner to meet our amazing partners and stay in touch with grassroots efforts right here in Oklahoma City.

When: Every Second Monday of each month from 6:00-7:30 pm

Where: *Possibilities* office - 621 NW 20th Street
For more information, please call 405-525-3131

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Look who's Opening Doors with Possibilities

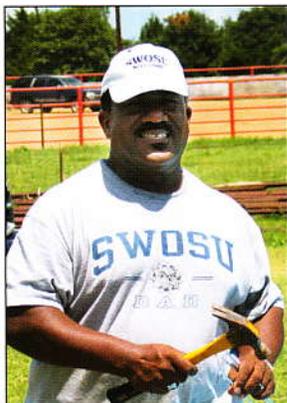
Hiawatha Bouldin

Hiawatha began participating with *Possibilities* in 2003 and works as a Preventionist at Eagle Ridge Institute.

The doors that opened for Hiawatha:

Connections, that's what *Possibilities* means to me. *Possibilities* has given me the power of connections in the community. It has given me the power to achieve and want a better society for all.

Possibilities has the power to put different people together for a common cause, which is to build a safer, better and friendly connected community. It helps me meet new people all over the city. My connections with *Possibilities* helped me build physical, mental and social resources which all working together, builds a better quality of community for all. *Possibilities* teaches and inspires you by bringing it all together.



Cassandra Bachrach



Cassandra began participating with *Possibilities* in 2009 while working as a teacher in Oklahoma City Public Schools.

The doors that opened for Cassandra:

Possibilities opened the doors of my soul. My racial fears were erased and I found they were not based on fact. I grew up with so many misconceptions about what others were like. The majority of people I worked with were people of different races and I saw they were just like me. I also erased the thought that if I wanted to do something, no one would help. I found many people who are ready to help not just themselves, but anyone who asked. I have gained a lot of confidence personally. The message I received was I am a leader. This is so different from the messages I have always gotten.

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Bert Olah, Jr.
President & CEO
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STAFF



The Possibilities staff, left to right: Liz Haynes, Minnie Vickers, Opal Cade, Shannon Dennis, Byron Jackson, and Mario Medrano.

Shannon Dennis, Executive Director, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work and a Masters of Social Work: Administration and Community Planning degree from the University of Oklahoma. She is an experienced facilitator who has served as a consultant for the Center for Nonprofits and as a faculty member for the University of Phoenix. Her experience in grassroots community development combined with her skills for planning and developing systems for sustainability serve her vision for a well-connected and vibrant Oklahoma City.

Byron Jackson, Training & Facilitation Specialist, came to *Possibilities* with a background in Social Work, earning his degree at the University of Oklahoma. Byron has an impressive track record of presenting community training on cultural diversity, team building and many other topics. His skill in working with diverse groups along with his extensive community contacts, sense of humor, unpredictable behavior, and odd assortment of clothing provides the *Possibilities* team with many assets.

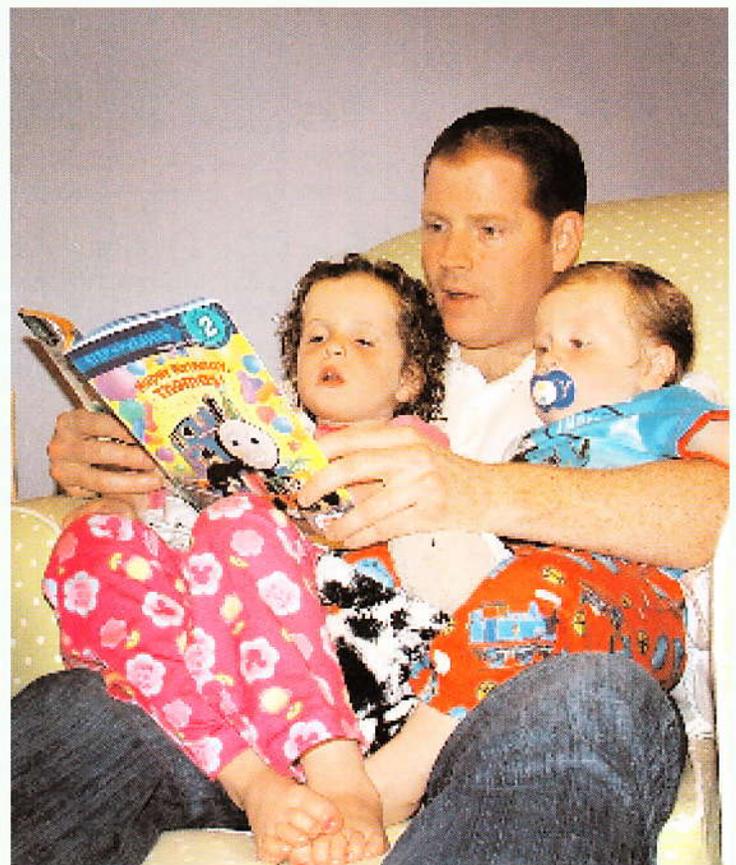
Mario Medrano, Community Development Specialist, came to *Possibilities* from the Hispanic American Student Services Office of the Oklahoma City School Board of Education where he served as the Bilingual Field Facilitator. Mario has facilitated program development as well as worked in community organizations through various projects. He brings bilingual skills as well as commitment to grassroots community work. Mario is also a skilled photographer.

Elizabeth (Liz) Haynes, Office Manager, joined *Possibilities* in April 2009. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Oklahoma City University. She has experience in research, analysis and training within the commercial mortgage industry, but has always wanted to work in the non-profit world helping to improve the lives' of others. Upon discovering *Possibilities*, she knew right away that she wanted to support its mission. As the Office Manager, she helps provide behind the scenes support to the dedicated community workers who make *Possibilities* program successful in Oklahoma City.

Minnie Vickers, Community Development Specialist, was discovered by *Possibilities* during work in the Garden Oaks area. Minnie had a successful career in business and now devotes her time to community work and the development of women's investment clubs.

Opal Cade, Community Development Specialist, came to *Possibilities* by way of General Motors, serving as a volunteer at *Possibilities* for 2 years before being transferred out of state. After retirement, Opal returned to *Possibilities* to continue her service to the community. Opal has excellent communication skills and enjoys working with people of all ages and backgrounds. Her joyful outlook and history of service to the community through her church makes Opal an excellent community worker. Her catering background also makes her very popular with *Possibilities* community partners.

Inasmuch Foundation, Oklahoma City Educare and Smart Start Central Oklahoma salute the work of *Possibilities, Inc.* in neighborhoods & schools on behalf of Oklahoma City's children.



**Read to a child for 20
minutes each day.**

DIRECTORS



Members of the Possibilities board, left to right: Mary Trivitt, Pat Schonwald, Anna Jacobson, Rick Johnson, Beth Rutledge, Tena Slaughter, Ted Streuli, Ed Pulido, Lucy Fritts and Amos Wamble.

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