



Arkansas Advocates
for Children and Families
Union Station
1400 W. Markham St., Suite 306
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 371-9678
www.aradvocates.org

Non-profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 2942
Little Rock, AR

Advocacy Matters



Spring 2024

IN THIS ISSUE:
Soup Sundays Spectacular
Marshallese Arkansans Gain Eligibility
Staff Spotlight: Camille Richoux

A SOUPer Great Time!



Many Arkansas Advocates staff attended Northwest Arkansas Soup Sunday.

Congratulations to our Golden Ladle Winners! In Northwest Arkansas, Embassy Suites took home first place with their Thai Coconut Chicken Soup. In Central Arkansas, Youth Home won the award with their Butternut Squash Soup.



Northwest Arkansas Soup Sunday Co-Chairs Jessica and Clint Schaff presented the Golden Ladle award.

Soup Sunday kicked off in Northwest Arkansas on February 18 at the Rogers Convention Center, and featured delicious soups, live music, and an auction of decadent desserts.



Patrons enjoyed the festivities at Central Arkansas Soup Sunday.

A second helping of the festivities was had in Central Arkansas on March 10 at The Venue at Westwind.

More than 1,000 people attended each event, enjoying soups and desserts, as well as bidding on silent auction items such as a

Costa Rica vacay, a Mighty Rib SoMa food tour, a trip to Asheville, North Carolina, and more.

Between the two events, a remarkable 80 “souperb” restaurants, catering businesses and bakeries provided delectable soups, bread, and sweets for the events.



Central Arkansas Soup Sunday Co-Chairs Shannon Collier-Tenison and Danyelle Walker (left) and emcee Donna Terrell (right) presented the Golden Ladle award.

We want to thank everyone who attended. Because of you, we were able to raise \$360,000 toward the future of Arkansas’s kids. If we missed you this year, we hope to see you next year!

All proceeds from the events contribute to upholding Arkansas Advocates’ mission to ensure that all Arkansas children and their families have the resources and opportunities to lead healthy and productive lives.

For more Arkansas Advocates event photos, visit flickr.com/photos/aacf.

SAVE THE DATE

Virtual Event

Join us via Zoom on Thursday, July 18 from 1:30-3:30 PM for a special training: Centering Equity in your Advocacy. Register at aradvocates.org/events

Centering Equity in Your Advocacy



Virtual Training
July 18
1:30-3:30 P.M.



Friends of Children Annual Luncheon

October 22 in Little Rock. Save the date; details soon!

Be Social

facebook.com/aradvocates
twitter.com/aacf
@aradvocates



Arkansas Advocates and Soup Sunday have made the finals in the Arkansas Times Best of Arkansas readers poll in the Best Nonprofit and Best Charity Event categories!

Arkansas Advocates Issue Areas

Arkansas Advocates focuses on key issue areas to help improve child well-being in Arkansas.

- Child welfare
- Economic security
- Early childhood and K-12 education
- Health care
- Hunger
- Immigrant children and families
- Juvenile justice
- Racial equity
- Tax and budget

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

Introducing our New Board President

Arkansas Advocates welcomes new board president Xochitl Delgado Solorzano. She is the assistant dean at the University of Arkansas and serves as the director of the Honors College Path Program. Solorzano holds two master's degrees, one in Spanish, and the other in public service. She has dedicated her career to advocacy and education. Her work has taken her all over the state of Arkansas, and all the way to Accra, Ghana, where she led the development of a financial literacy program at two schools.



Arkansas Advocates 2024 Board of Directors

- Xochitl Delgado Solorzano, President
- Nikki Edge, PhD, Vice President
- Gene Lu, MD, Treasurer
- Stacey Sturner, JD, Secretary
- Shannon Collier-Tenison, PhD, At-Large Member
- Brooke Montgomery, PhD, At-Large Member
- Gayatri Agnew
- Hershey Garner, JD, MD
- Tamara P. Glover, PhD
- Rejena S. Grotjohn, JD
- Susan Sullivan Miller, MD
- Rev. Natasha Murray-Norman
- Martie North
- Sheldon Riklon, MD
- Chad Rodgers, MD
- William Schwab, PhD
- Aaron Strong, MD
- Pastor Dwight Townsend
- Danyelle Walker, JD

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Camille Richoux Health Policy Director

Camille Richoux joined Arkansas Advocates as Health Policy Director in September 2023.



She received her Master of Public Health from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) and previously worked for the Arkansas Department of Health in the HIV/STD program. From 2016-2018, Camille served as a Prevention Fellow for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (SAMHSA/CSAP), assisting with state agency overdose prevention programs and grants. At UAMS, Camille helped design and publish community-engaged research on harm reduction and LGBTQ+ youth quality of life issues in Arkansas.

Her advocacy focuses on addressing racial disparities in maternal mortality and updating sex education standards. She serves as the Board co-president of the Central Arkansas Harm Reduction Project, a local nonprofit organization.

A Fond Farewell and a Warm Welcome in NWA

Arkansas Advocates bids farewell to Missy Darwin Kincaid, who was our first Northwest Arkansas Development Director. She joined our team in January 2019, and her successful fundraising has been transformational for Arkansas Advocates' work in Northwest Arkansas and beyond. We will miss her, but we know she'll always support us and cheer on our successful advocacy for all Arkansas children. We wish Missy all the best in her future endeavors.

We are happy to welcome new Northwest Arkansas Development Director Esther Schroeder. For the last nine years, Esther worked at Make-A-Wish Mid-South in Fayetteville, AR. She is a graduate of the College of

Charleston in Charleston, SC, and studied fundraising at the Indiana University School of Fundraising. Esther raised \$6 million in her time at Make-A-Wish. Due to her efforts, Make-A-Wish Mid-South raised their fundraising budget by 347% within two years of her starting there, and the Make-A-Wish Northwest Arkansas office is on track to raise \$1 million annually.

Her interest in Arkansas Advocates and advocacy related to children and healthcare stems from her personal experiences having a child with a complex health condition. Esther is a passionate, determined individual, as her prior work shows. We are very excited to welcome her on board!

Great News for Arkansas's Marshallese Neighbors

President Joe Biden signed a government funding bill in March that included a legislative fix that restores Marshallese Arkansans' eligibility for SNAP and other safety-net programs. Marshallese citizens were mistakenly excluded from benefit programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) when Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Responsibility Act of 1996 – the law sometimes referred to as “welfare reform.”

The Marshall Islands were the site of nuclear weapons testing that left parts of the islands uninhabitable. The United States established Compacts of Free Association (COFA), which includes the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Palau, and Micronesia. COFA citizens are free to come and go and live and work in the US, but they are not officially “immigrants,” as defined by federal law.

The 1996 welfare law was passed to ensure that only lawful immigrants were eligible for safety-net programs. Marshallese citizens were not officially defined as immigrants, leading to their wrongful exclusion from such programs.

Arkansas and other states will now need to revise their eligibility requirements for programs such as SNAP and ensure that citizens of the Marshall Islands and other Compact of Free Association citizens can be approved for benefits if they meet other eligibility requirements.

Donate to Support Advocacy

Visit www.aradvocates.org/donate

Text ADVOCATE to 243725

Donate through a Donor Advised Fund

Help us plan for the future by including a bequest to Arkansas Advocates in your estate plans

Fran Carter	Esther Schroeder
501-454-5014	501-258-6836

DID YOU KNOW?

Although most gifts to Arkansas Advocates come in the form of cash and check, there are other ways to give. You can make a donation of stock or transfer from your IRA with beneficial tax implications. For more information, contact Fran or Esther or your financial advisor.