



*“Hope is the feeling you have that the feeling you have isn’t permanent.”
- Jean Kerr*





ANNUAL REPORT 2009/2010

Message From the Executive Director

September 2009 marked Mourning Hope's 15th year of offering hope and healing to grieving children in our community. In honor of this momentous event, Governor Heineman declared the last week of September as "Nebraska Children's Grief Awareness Week." This proclamation offered a pronounced focus on children's grief awareness issues throughout Nebraska.

Although my tenure with Mourning Hope has been considerably shorter than 15 years, as I reflect on my personal and professional experiences with Mourning Hope, one word continually surfaces – *Gratitude*.



- I'm **grateful** that Pam Dinneen and Kay Kronholm had the passion, dedication, energy and determination to develop a children's grief center in Nebraska over 15 years ago, and that I have been provided the amazing opportunity to serve as its executive director.
- I'm **grateful** to all the Mourning Hope volunteers who so fervently and unselfishly devote themselves to Mourning Hope's vision of a community where all children are embraced, listened to, understood and effectively supported.
- I'm **grateful** to the organizations, funders and the community-at-large for consistently supporting our nonprofit organization, even in times when funding sources are scarce.
- But most importantly, I'm **grateful** to all children—past, present and future—who offer us a seat on their very intimate and personal grief journeys. The courage necessitated by these children is beyond comprehension, and gratitude fills my heart to just walk alongside these brave individuals.

As Mourning Hope looks toward the next 15 years of providing services to the community, I know that thousands of children and their families will be given the opportunity to mourn the loss of a loved one—not alone—but with compassionate facilitators and peers going through similar experiences. For this, I am **grateful**.

With Hope,

Carly Woythaler-Runestad

Carly Woythaler-Runestad, MHA
Executive Director



Guiding Principles

Mourning Hope envisions a society where all grieving children are embraced, listened to, understood and effectively supported by their families, teachers, caregivers and others significant in their lives.

We envision that within each grieving family, parents and caregivers model healthy grieving strategies, while understanding the unique needs of their youth.

We envision a society which values and encourages healthy grieving practices such as openness to talking about losses, embracing the pain of loss, remembering those who died, searching for meaning and giving and receiving ongoing support.

Through best practices, education and innovation, we will measurably improve the lives of individuals in the communities we serve.

We acknowledge that bereavement practices vary in profound ways depending on cultural background. The Center will create an environment that honors the culturally distinct mourning rituals, traditions, and behavioral expressions of grief experienced by program participants.

In partnership with our staff and volunteers, and in collaboration with other organizations that share our goals, we will commit our resources to programs that are ethically, socially and financially responsible.

With patience, empathy, openness and a willingness to listen with our hearts and minds, Mourning Hope humbly companions each person who seeks support.

Mission

Mourning Hope Grief Center companions grieving children, teens, young adults and their families when someone significant in their lives has a serious illness or has died. Mourning Hope provides support groups, community education, grief resources and referrals.

Vision

Mourning Hope Grief Center will be recognized as the premier provider of grief support services for youth and their families in Lincoln and surrounding communities. Mourning Hope envisions a society which values and encourages healthy grieving practices. The Center will serve as a safe haven of support, hope, companionship and unconditional acceptance for each person seeking assistance. Through innovative programming, specialized support services, and knowledgeable instruction, Mourning Hope will foster a healthy response to grief, one child and one family at a time.

“Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all.” - Emily Dickinson

2009/2010 Program At-A-Glance

2,715

people were directly impacted by Mourning Hope during FYE 6/30/10, representing a

16% ↑

increase in service utilization over the last fiscal year.

Support Group Programs

173 youth

+

117 adults

290

participants attended Mourning Hope's grief support group programs.

Community Education

40 presentations were made to the community.

2,002

People attended these presentations, representing a

20% ↑

increase in attendance over the last fiscal year.

Grief Resources and Referrals

423

calls were received, representing a

25% ↑

increase over the last fiscal year.

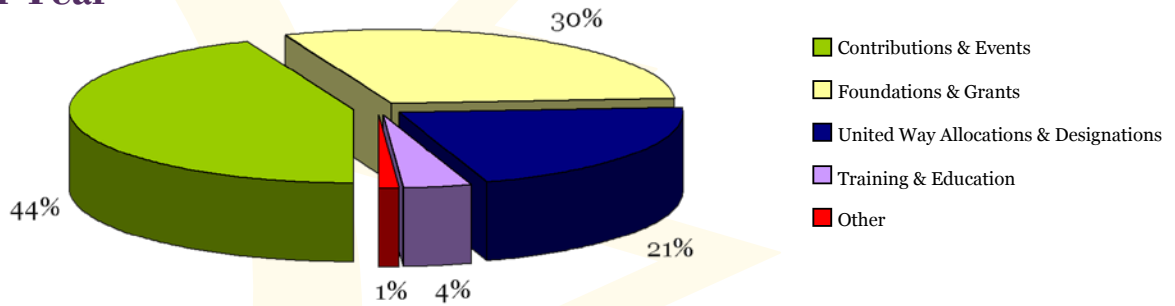
Volunteers

2,395

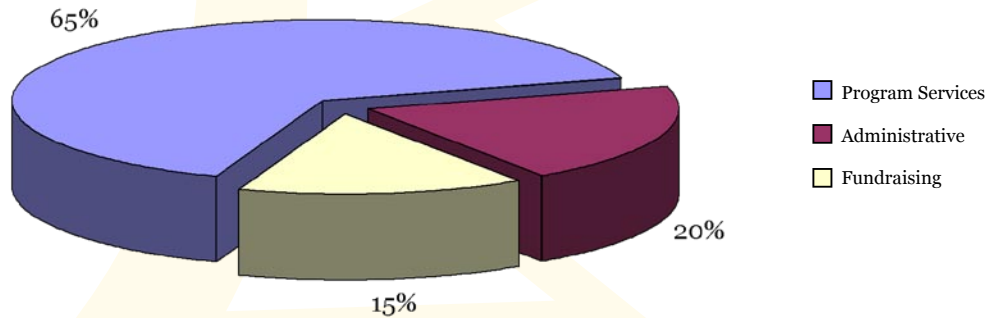
volunteer hours logged.

2009/2010 Fiscal Year

Revenue



Expenses



“There is no medicine like hope, no incentive so great and no tonic so powerful as expectation of something tomorrow.” - Orison Swett Marden

Mourning Hope Grief Center’s 2009/2010 Leadership

Board of Directors

President - Nicole Hecht Juranek
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 Past President - Lindy Mullin
 Treasurer - Deb Buhro
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 Brian Hoffart
 Sue Kittinger
 Ida Lim
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 Roger Millnitz
 Gayla Nelsen

Staff

Carly Woythaler-Runestad, MHA
 Executive Director
 Jennifer Bass, M.Ed.
 Program Director

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Our Supporters

\$10,000 and above

A Little Hope, Inc.

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Community Health Endowment of Lincoln

Jewish Federation of Omaha Foundation

Peter Kiewit Foundation

\$2,500 - \$4,999

HoriSun Hospice Community Foundation

Lincoln Community Outreach Foundation

World's Foremost Bank/Cabela's

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Ameritas Charitable Foundation

Alan Berg & Susan Hansen

Brian Dittmann

Dave & Terry Hansen

Frank & Elizabeth Hilsabeck

Harris Charitable Foundation

Interstate Insurance Services

Kathryn & Kirk Down

Lauren Madsen

Lindy Mullin

May L. Flanagan Foundation

National Research Corporation

Nebraska Wesleyan University

Roper & Sons

Runza Restaurants

Sam's Club

Southeast Nebraska Cancer Center

St. Elizabeth's Medical Center

Swanson Russell

The Gallup Organization

Tonn & Holly Ostergard

Union Bank & Trust Co.

Valentino's

\$500-\$999

Abel Foundation

BryanLGH Medical Center

Deb Buhro

Home Real Estate

Hoppe Lumber Company

Jeff & Lori Patterson

Judith Runion

Lincoln Benefit Life Insurance

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital

Pam & John Dinneen

Pat Gaydusek

Sandi Fabry

Stephanie Stearley

Tom & Sue Tallman

Universal Surety Company

Vine Congregational Church

Foundation

West Gate Bank

Wilma & Michael Cronin

\$250 - \$499

Advantage Personnel and

Employment Services

Barry & Susan Gourley

Bettenhausen Family Foundation

Bob & Barbara Bartle

Brad & Gail Swiggart

Gregory S. Johnson

Jeff & Sarah David

Joan & Sean Campbell

Larry & Janice Dlugosh

Mary Reckmeyer

Neil Jacobson

Ron & Chris Harris

Sandi Carrington-Robertson

Shannon & Mike Urbanovsky

Unico Group, Inc.

\$100 - \$249

Beatty & John Brasch

Ben Soucek & Tracy Follmer

Bison, Inc.

Bouwens Buggies

Brian & Amy Baxter

Bruce & Cindy Sellon

Charlene & Mike Maloney

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Christie & Clifford Schroff

DeAnna & Jennifer Jurgens

Deb Rasmussen

Diane Lydick

Douglas & Michelle McDaniel

Garner Industries

Gary Herr

Gayla Nelsen

Jack Guggenmos

Janet & Greg Olson

Jeanne Riha

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Jennifer & Kelly Amend

Jennifer Bass

Jennifer Benson

Jennifer Lesoing-Lucs

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Jon Borton

Julie & Kevin Horne

Keith & Jan Prettyman

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Kristin Stiles

Larry & Nancy Bare

Linda & Dennis Hecht

Lorraine Merliss

Lux Middle School

Michelle Skala

Nebr. Hematology Oncology, P.C.

Nicole Hecht Juranek

Norma & Gordon Fuhr

Pinnacle Bank - Pine Lake

Psychotherapy Resources

Ray Lineweber

Rick Wallace

Roger & Janet Millnitz

Shayne R. Ortmeier

Sonata Decor and Gifts for the

Home

Steve & Claudia Russell

Sue & Vern Kittinger

Sue Dutton

Theodore & Cheryl Anne Parent

William & Eloise Kloefkorn

William Stiles

Other

Abby White

Alice & Scott Skultety

Alison Kortefay

Allen & Kathy Moore

Angela Mittan

Angella Sue Moore

Anita Zichek

Ashley Erickson

Barbara Graue

Becky & Gordon Shupe

Bev & Michael Swanson

Bobbie Jones

Brenda M. Earleywine

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Carmella L. Strong

Carol & Beth Butler

Carol Froscheiser

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Christine Connor

Dan & Patti Gunther

Darlene Palmer

David & Mary Pedersen

Dean Way

Deidra Watson

Dennis & Nancy Stuckey

Diane & John Guthery

Don & Karen Hoelsing

Donna Semin

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Eric & Linda Hemmingsen

Erin Baumert

Evert & Lisa Sufficool

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Gale & Julie Pokorny

Gayle & Mary Starr

Georgette & Daniel Kingkade

Glori Trube

Gloria Stingley

Harry Bullerdiel & Elizabeth Katt

Herbert & Noreen Amend

James & Sharon Cripe

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Jan McReynolds

Janice A. Hamer

Jeanette Thomsen

Jene Pierson

Jill & Clark Hoover

Jill M. Staberg

Jim & Cheryl Keyser

JJ & Judy Dinneen

Joan Michelsen

JoAnne Kissel

John & Nancy Gerrard

John & Lynn Sedlacek

Joyce Schiermann

Judith K. Puetz

Julia Larson

Kara Palmer

Karla B. Bahm

Karin Kelley

Kathryn Fleming

Kim Larson

Kim Milana

Kim Munnis

Lana Peterson

Lauri Earhart

Lee C. Glaser

Lesia Christiancy

Linda Ashelford

Lisa Borchardt

Liz Shea-McCoy

LuAnne & Richard Montgomery

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Nancy Philipps

Neal & Lois Thomas

Nettie Peitsch & Judy Bouwens

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Richard & Lynne Schroeder

Richard & Patti Cacioppo

Robert & Mary Helen Haeffner

Robin Houser

Roger & Janet Meints

Ross Dirks

Russell & Janice Johnson

Russell Svoboda & Amy Scholtz

Svoboda

Scott Delisi

Sharon & Glenn Bennett

Silvija Augstums

Stacy & Matthew Brass

Steve & Jan Thelen

Steve & Patricia Clements

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Suzanne Sughroue

Tammy S. Gebers

Terry & Brenda Wagner

Thomas & Kelli Marie Wood

Tim & Carol Stivrins

Tobias J. Orr

Todd & Brenda Willet

Todd & Barbara Smisek

Travis & Samantha Eckhardt

Troy & Schawn League

Tuesday Morning Lecture Circle

United Methodist Women

Vicky Drozd

Proud Agency of the:



Thank You to our Wonderful Volunteers!



Gayla Nelsen a teacher, mentor and volunteer.

Gayla Nelsen (pictured at left with Dr. Lindy Mullin and Carly Woythaler-Runestad) has devoted her life to serving children, first as an award-winning elementary school teacher for over 30 years, and now as a volunteer for Mourning Hope Grief Center. She is strongly dedicated to the mission of Mourning Hope and has been a mentor for hundreds of children and a model trainer for other grief facilitators.

"Children know immediately that she is someone they can trust," says Runestad, Executive Director for Mourning Hope. "She listens and makes every child feel important, helping them through the grief process." As a model facilitator and mentor, she is respected and emulated by others.

Mourning Hope provides grief support to children, teens, young adults and their caregivers who have experienced the serious illness or death of someone special to them. They provide support groups, community education, training, grief resources and referrals.

Mourning Hope Grief Center is located at 4919 Baldwin Avenue. To learn more or how you can volunteer, visit their website at www.mourninghope.org or contact them at 402-488-8989.



I've seen and met angels wearing the disguise of ordinary people leading ordinary lives; Filled with love, compassion, forgiveness and sacrifice - Tracy Chapman

As you open the door to Mourning Hope, you will encounter many ordinary people who make an extraordinary difference in the lives of our community's grieving families. Our volunteers' talents are endless—they facilitate meaningful groups, bake amazing cookies, piece together beautiful quilts, and keep our house looking loved and clean. They raise money, educate our community and make decisions that have kept Mourning Hope as a beacon of light for grieving youth and their families for over 15 years.

This year Mourning Hope hosted its 2nd Annual "Thanks a Bunch Brunch," designed to celebrate our amazing community of volunteers. It's also an opportunity for us to thank those extraordinary volunteers who so quietly give of their hearts. This year we honored Linda Ashelford, who for the past several years has so lovingly sewn our quilts. Each quilt tells a story of the many families who have found hope and healing inside the walls of Mourning Hope. Sue Kittinger and Gayla Nelsen were also honored for their exceptional commitment to Mourning Hope. For over 12 years, Sue Kittinger served as the Mourning Hope Treasurer. Mourning Hope also celebrated Gayla Nelsen's 2010 "Making A Difference" Award presented by the Community Health Endowment of Lincoln. Gayla was

recognized in the Lincoln Journal Star as a community volunteer who continually makes a difference in the lives of young people. Linda, Gayla and Sue are but three of over 60 volunteers who give so selflessly of their time to Mourning Hope. Our volunteers are ordinary people who have extraordinary hearts filled with love, compassion and sacrifice.

Thank you to each one of you for continuing to bring hope and healing to those that are grieving. We are truly thankful for you!

Jennifer L. Bass
Program Director



Partners in Hope

The Mourning Hope Board is proud to annually thank an organization or business that has made a significant impact on Mourning Hope.

We affectionately call this award "Partners in Hope." This year we publicly recognized HoriSun Hospice as our award recipient.

HoriSun Hospice consists of a team of committed and specially trained healthcare professionals providing expertise on living life to the fullest with dignity and comfort. The HoriSun Hospice team collaborates and implements a plan that provides the optimum in end of life services.



Throughout the last several years, HoriSun has partnered with Mourning Hope to bring in a national speaker on grief-related issues, most recently bringing Harold Ivan Smith to Lincoln.

While the financial investment they have made in the Center has been amazing, the dedication of the staff at HoriSun has been equally astounding, and we thank them for the wonderful partnership that has been built over the years. It was with great pleasure that Mourning Hope announced HoriSun Hospice as our 2010 Partners in Hope award winner.

Truckloads of Help

Through Truckloads of Help, a program provided by the Center for People in Need, 225 human services agencies across the state receive countless resources for their low-income clients. On average, the Center spends \$220,000 a year to purchase \$22 million dollars worth of merchandise that is distributed at no charge to the agencies and their clients. Mourning Hope is one of the human services agencies that greatly benefits from the Truckloads of Help program on a monthly basis.



Become a Friend of Mourning Hope

Mourning Hope exists because every child deserves the opportunity to grieve in a supportive and understanding environment. Because the death of a family member brings financial instability, along with other life-altering changes, our services are available at no cost to the participants, and no family is ever turned away.

YES! I would like to help grieving children through Mourning Hope.
Enclosed, please find my gift of \$_____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

My gift is given in remembrance of: _____

Please mail donations to: Mourning Hope Grief Center
4919 Baldwin Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68504

Donations may also be made online via credit card at www.mourninghope.org.

Bequests and Endowments:

We are most grateful to those donors who want to leave something for Mourning Hope in their Wills or pursuant to beneficiary designations on life insurance, retirement plans or other estate planning documents. All such documents should specify that the gift goes to Mourning Hope of Lincoln, Nebraska. Please let us know if you have an interest in other types of gift planning ideas. We enjoy a partnership with the Lincoln Community Foundation, Inc. to work directly with our donors to offer charitable remainder trusts, charitable gift annuities or to create endowment funds that will provide for a lasting stream of financial support for us. Please give us a call if we can help with your gift planning questions.

"Providing a safe, caring environment for families to join together and begin healing after a significant loss became my passion over 15 years ago. With the help of many others, who give so freely from their hearts, Mourning Hope is a place where all feelings are accepted and all people are respected for who they are and where they are in their grief journey."

"Children are often the 'forgotten mourners' as families go through the grieving process. Providing a safe place for them to begin the healing process as they explore and express their feelings and experiences is what Mourning Hope offers families. Being able to walk with someone through some of the darkest and most difficult times in their lives is such a gift. They trust us with their feelings and honor us with their stories and in turn we support them in their healing. Ultimately, we give hope for a brighter tomorrow."

- Pam Dinneen, Mourning Hope Founder



...hope is a
wonderful
thing.



**Mourning HOPE**
grief center

4919 Baldwin Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68504