

# y of a community



Tanna Kinnaman/DN

Children play in the brief sunshine outside the Malone Day Care Center, 2032 U St. Pictured from left are Jennilyn Malicaden, 3, Preston Payne, 3, Trevino Brown, 3, and Kayla Quick, 2.

## The Malone Community Center focus is on low-income families

By Erin Schulte  
Staff Reporter

The Malone Community Center, established in 1932 as a black youth center, has been transformed in recent years.

Because of demographic changes, the center now provides services primarily aimed at the low-income families of Lincoln, said Glenn Payne, assistant daycare coordinator for the center.

"One would like to think that it's a black center, but it isn't. We target low-income families," Payne said.

The black community in Lincoln was once concentrated in the downtown area of Lincoln that surrounds the center, but now has spread throughout all areas of town, he said.

There are low-income families of different races in those areas that take advantage of the center's programs, primarily their daycare.

Daycare is provided to children of any race, many of whom pay for their care from Medicare of Title 20 supplements, and some who pay a minimal fee.

There are advantages for children who use the Malone daycare, Payne said.

The children are exposed to many different cultures at the center, and are taught about black history, which in turn will make them more "culturally balanced," Payne said.

The main focus of the center is educating people about black history and traditions, and planting self-esteem in black teenagers who,

unlike other cultures, lack rites of passage that help them along the path to adulthood, he said.

Classes highlight black community leaders and scientists, so students become "enlightened" as to how blacks have contributed to the community.

For instance, the holiday "Juneteenth" is being promoted by the Malone Center.

The Juneteenth celebration, a holiday long celebrated in the South but often forgotten in the North, remembers Civil War-era blacks from the North who traveled to southern states to inform black slaves of their freedom.

The center also distributes food boxes from the Lincoln Food Bank to families in immediate need of food, often after a cycle of food stamps has run out.

Also affiliated with the Malone center is a retirement home, which provides services for the senior citizens.

The center is supported by funds from the United Way-CHAD and with block grants to cover the bare minimum costs of running their programs.

Fund-raisers and voluntary membership fees from families of \$25 also help support the center.

Volunteers from local colleges, universities, and high schools help with the daycare program, mostly during the school year.

Lincoln high schools have required 20 hours of community service for Citizen Issues classes. Many classes at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln also require volunteer hours.

## Hispanic center program promotes prenatal care

By Tanna Kinnaman  
Staff Reporter

The services and activities at the Hispanic Community Center, 2300 O St., reach a broad spectrum of people in the Hispanic community and the Lincoln community-at-large.

Young mothers and pregnant women have become regular visitors to the center since it opened the Teddy Bear Clinic in April.

The purpose of the clinic is to encourage lower income and unwed mothers to get care early on in their pregnancy.

Women in the program receive teddy credits for such practices as attending parenting classes, keeping their WIC appointments, prenatal visits to their doctor and getting their children immunized.

Women can then exchange their teddy credits for baby items such as baby clothes, diapers, bottles, cribs and strollers.

"The shelves of merchandise had to be restocked the first three weeks the Teddy Bear Clinic was open," said G. Elliot Rivas, assistant director of the Hispanic Community Center.

Some people, like Rick Harder, a nurse at Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., come to the Hispanic Cen-

ter to learn Spanish.

"I wanted to learn the second largest language in the United States," Harder said. "It may also help me in my job down the line."

Ester Pence, who works at the department of social services, said she planned to travel to South America someday and thought it would be helpful to know how to speak the language.

Pence also said it was important in her job to speak Spanish.

Harder said he was impressed by the quality of instructors and the informal atmosphere of the classes.

"That's because the teachers come from South American countries and can give their students a cultural perspective," Rivas said.

The 8th annual Hispanic Heritage Festival at the Nebraska State Fairgrounds was attended by more than 15,000 people last year.

This year it will be held September 16, Mexican Independence Day.

The festival features native food, music, dance, and artifacts from Hispanic cultures around the world.

Traditional dishes from Chile, Mexico, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Republic of the Phillipines, Colombia and Guatemala were offered last year, Rivas said.



Tanna Kinnaman/DN

Alix Gomez, a Spanish instructor at the Hispanic Center, reviews Spanish lessons with student, Rick Harder. Harder, a nurse at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., said he was impressed with the quality of the instructors and the informal atmosphere of the classes.