

# inside&out

## So Much Hope for So Many

*Cheryl Smith, longtime K-PEP GED instructor, shares her thoughts.*

**“I worked as a librarian before I took a job with Adult Ed in 1988.** I think it was about 1992 that I started working at K-PEP. Teaching is something that I’ve grown to love. Sandy (Sandy Lager, Ms. Smith’s teaching partner) and I are very proud of the fact that we are able to be role models for people from different kinds of backgrounds, who also are very dear friends. I think that suggests to many of the residents that people can get on together, no matter who they are or what color they are.

“In our work with the residents, we are taking people from various stages to one step, two steps or three steps higher. We try to provide them with the education, the confidence and the hope that they can not only attain a GED but change their lives.

“As each person comes into the program, we do a quick intake test to give us an idea of what level they’re at in reading and math. The ninth or tenth grade level is about the highest with this test, but we’ve had people who have tested at the second grade level. Usually Sandy and I think that we can work with anybody, but we prefer to work with people who test at least at the fifth grade level because we think we can raise them to the level of the GED. Some students have not been in school for ten or fifteen years and are just a bit rusty, but we also have people who left school in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade and have never been back. So we have various levels of success.

“The toughest part of the work that we do is to realize that some of our students don’t really want or think they need education. To us, education is the pathway to so many choices and we feel sorry that they would limit their choices. We have some people who we cannot motivate to want to do this. And then we’ve had other people who come and say ‘Thank goodness I am provided with this opportunity and I intend to make the best of it’. We have always felt that if you can reach even one person and can make a difference in their life, that is so rewarding. It brings us to work every day and keeps us going.



*Cheryl Smith (right) works with a student at the K-PEP Women’s Facility.*

*(continued on next page)*

**INSIDE:** ■ Three K-PEP Employees Honored  
■ Board Changes Announced

## Hope for So Many *(continued)*

"I think that K-PEP is successful because of the teamwork and the vision of the Director. From the very beginning it has had a great foundation, and it has built on that foundation. We have seen changes in society, and K-PEP has responded to those changes. For example, drugs have become more prevalent, and younger and younger people are beginning to use them. K-PEP changed its rules and regulations to accept more hard-core drug users and they have instituted programs to help hard-core people. They have increased their staff and have increased their expertise in the Substance Abuse Program with continual improvement. KPEP has changed so that we can accommodate a 17-year old as well as a 60-year old.

"I know personally how important this program is. Without K-PEP, so much hope would be gone for so many people. There would be less hope for the younger generation because the cycle would continue. I think there is only going to be a greater need for places like K-PEP in the future."

*"We try to provide residents with the education, the confidence and the hope that they can not only attain a GED, but change their lives."*

## K-PEP Announces Board Changes

At the January 2004 meeting of the K-PEP Board of Directors, a new group of officers were elected to serve. Judge Vincent Westra was elected President, replacing outgoing board President Sandy Lager, who headed the K-PEP board for three years. Jon Haskell will serve as Vice President, Rollie Preuss as Secretary and Karla Dorscht as Treasurer.

In other board news, Robert Pangle, after 9 years of service to the K-PEP board, has resigned and been replaced by Jeff Fink. Mr. Fink is the Chief Assistant Prosecutor and has worked on each of the four teams in the Prosecutor's office, where he began his career in 1980. He has a bachelor's degree from WMU and earned his law degree at the University of Toledo School of Law.

## Need a hand? Just ask!

**K-PEP provides volunteer assistance** to local non-profits, senior citizens and handicapped persons. We can provide volunteers to perform a variety of community service tasks, so whatever the need, just ask us.

In Kalamazoo County call: Jason McCune at 269-383-0444 or Cynthia Tall at 269-383-1386

In Berrien County call: Charles Adams at 269-926-1284

In Calhoun County call: Carl Crawford at 269-963-2085

In Muskegon County call: Linda Sheets at 231-726-2733



## Meet 2003's Best

### *K-PEP Employees Chosen by Their Peers as Outstanding*



*Keith McGahan, Calhoun County Facility*

It has become a tradition at K-PEP that at the year's end we recognize individuals who represent the values and ethics of the organization. This year is no different than the past in that we have three staff members recognized by their peers for outstanding service during 2003. **Keith McGahan, Linda Sheets and Crystal Cooper** received this award during the annual K-PEP Christmas party on December 5, 2003.

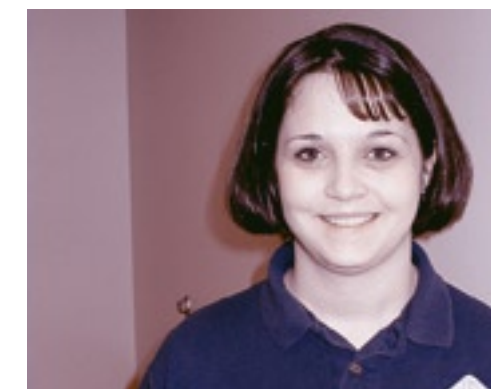
Keith McGahan received this recognition for his role as Group Facilitator at the Calhoun County facility. Keith started at K-PEP in May of 2002 after a long career in public safety with the Kalamazoo Valley Enforcement Team (KVET). Keith is considered one of the foremost drug experts in West Michigan.

Keith is helpful, knowledgeable and flexible with his schedule. He is also eager to take on new projects. Although Keith works in the substance abuse department, he has also been very instrumental in getting the Domestic Assault program started in Battle Creek.

Another outstanding K-PEP employee is Crystal Cooper, Resident Coordinator at the Kalamazoo Men's Facility, who started at K-PEP in June of 2002. Crystal is known to handle many different responsibilities well and keeps calm in stressful situations. Crystal is a take-charge individual who, in spite of her relative youth, commands respect from the residents with whom she works; not always an easy task for a woman working in a male correctional facility. Professional, cheerful, and positive are all adjectives her peers used to describe Crystal Cooper.

Linda Sheets was also recognized for her outstanding performance. Linda works as a Resident Coordinator Supervisor in K-PEP's Muskegon County facility. She began her career at K-PEP in October 2002 and has been instrumental in the transition to K-PEP programming in Muskegon. Linda is known to be very talented, picking up on new tasks very quickly. She is always pleasant and treats staff and residents with dignity and respect.

Congratulations to Keith, Linda, and Crystal! All three are excellent ambassadors and representatives for K-PEP.



*Crystal Cooper, Kalamazoo Men's Facility*

*Linda Sheets was not available for a photograph at press time. Her photo will run in an upcoming newsletter edition.*

## Can you help?

K-PEP is seeking donations of:

- Books and magazines of general interest
- Men's dress clothing for job interviews
- Computers for word-processing and Internet access

If you have items you are willing to donate, please call our office at 269-383-0450. K-PEP is a non-profit organization with a 501c3 designation. All donations are tax-deductible. Thanks!



# K-PEP Staff On the Move

October 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003

## Hired:

Roosevelt Sherrod	Resident Coordinator	Muskegon
Edgar Hill	Group Facilitator	Muskegon
Michael Atkinson	Resident Coordinator	Berrien
Lance Slater	Resident Coordinator	Berrien
Kenneth Kimmel	Resident Coordinator	Kalamazoo Men's
Donald Divis	Resident Coordinator	Berrien
James Hagenbarth	Resident Coordinator	Berrien

## Promoted:



Andrew Fitzpatrick,  
Full-Time Resident Coordinator,  
Calhoun County Facility



Lance Slater,  
Full-Time Resident Coordinator,  
Berrien County Facility



Grey Wilcox,  
Full-Time Resident Coordinator,  
Kalamazoo Men's Facility

October 1, 2003 - December 31, 2003	
1st quarter results:	
Average Daily Count	187.8
Admissions	283
Successful Graduates	196
Jobs Obtained	157
GED Tests	79
GED Certificates	6
Substance Abuse Graduates	
Residents	163
Weekend Intervention	16
Resident Income	\$282,909.64
Rent Paid	\$139,346.77
Court Costs/Restitution Paid	\$ 21,353.00



Kalamazoo Probation Enhancement Program, Inc.  
519 South Park St. • Kalamazoo, MI 49007

RRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE PAID  
KALAMAZOO, MI  
PERMIT NO. 307

K-PEP is a private, non-profit probation residential center for adult offenders. Our mission is to provide a cost-effective and community-based productive alternative to incarceration. Our program provides the opportunity and structure for men and women to take personal responsibility in all areas of their lives.