



The Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy's Annual Report on Activities in 2022

*Presented to the
OICA Board of Directors at its Annual Retreat
Thursday, February 24, 2023
and the General Public on oica.org*



*Celebrating 40 Years of Advocating
for Oklahoma's Children
1983 - 2023*



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***The success OlCA enjoyed
in 2022 was only made
possible by the work of the
entire team:***

***Board of Directors,
Staff, Sponsors, and
Advocates from
Across Oklahoma.***

Make A Difference

Directly Impact the Lives of Youth. OICA works daily at the Oklahoma State Capitol during the legislative session to impact bills which affect young Oklahomans. Our work has expanded opportunities for health insurance for youth, supported policies to protect children from harmful situations, and elevated services for foster youth, those with disabilities, and young Oklahomans who want to engage in advocacy.

Rally the State's Business Community to Our Cause. Events and programs offer fantastic opportunities for you to show your commitment to the children of the state of Oklahoma.

Help promote community outreach. Events and programs provide unique opportunities for Oklahomans to come together for our children. Without your support, our work cannot continue!

"Our partnership with OICA to get state funds in support of Double Up Oklahoma was the key to our success. Thanks to OICA rural communities in Oklahoma have more access to fresh produce, local farmers and grocers get more sales, and our most vulnerable got a boost to their food budgets."

-Chris Bernard, Executive Director – Hunger Free Oklahoma

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2022 EVENTS

Legislative Learning Lab – Late January/Early February

Begun in 2022, this is the training that most legislators should get but often do not receive. It is our opportunity to educate, inform, and empower advocates from all over Oklahoma to be well-prepared to follow and engage during Oklahoma's legislative session and beyond. Attendees were highly engaged and motivated; they were ready for the rigors of the 2022 legislative session. OICA

Child Advocacy Chili Cook-Off and Capitol Advocacy Day – March

For the first time, the Chili Cook-off was moved to the State Capitol as our chili chefs set up in the south parking lot. OICA recognized the work of our legislative and legal partners across the state. Attendees of this event get the opportunity to show off their chili-making skills or stop by and try some truly outstanding creations. Lawmakers came to the event and there was press coverage, giving OICA and the assembled child advocates an important venue to advocate for children's issues.

Kid Governor® Kickoff – May

OICA joined the National Kid Governor® program after four years. Expanding from simply a leadership opportunity for one lucky 5th-grader, the program now embodies a civics enrichment program for 5th grade classes across the state. A full curriculum was set, including materials and a comic book designed to show students the importance of their participation in the governing process, including an election from among all the Kid Governor® classrooms of a next Kid Governor. OICA is extraordinarily grateful to Gov. David and First Lady Rhonda Walters for hosting the fundraising event for the program, which was attended by Gov. George and First Lady Donna Nigh, Gov. Frank and First Lady Cathy Keating, Gov. Brad and First Lady Kim Henry, and Gov. Mary Fallin and First Gentleman Wade Christensen, along with a host of donors who made the Kid Governor® program possible.

6th Annual Heroes Ball – July

This was OICA's premier 2023 event to recognize seven "Heroes for Children," exemplary advocates for their work on behalf of Oklahoma's youth. Held for the second year in dual locations in Tulsa and Oklahoma City, it was our most visible event, with press coverage and hundreds of engaged guests in attendance, from civic and political leaders to child advocates and business leaders involved in their communities. Reflecting lingering concerns about the pandemic, the Heroes Ball was a blended event with options for in-person or virtual attendance. Not only did the event raise awareness of OICA's vital mission, it raised the lion's share of funding for the OICA team to continue making a critical and positive difference in the lives of children.

FORE! The Children Golf Tournament – Fall

Despite being rescheduled several times, Mother Nature would never let us get in the 2022 event. The 2023 tournament is scheduled for this Fall.

Fall Forum – October

This annual forum gathered partners from across Oklahoma to help shape OICA's legislative agenda for the 2023 legislative session. Attendees heard from a series of subject-matter experts on a range of children's and political issues, while enjoying networking opportunities with other child advocates and advocacy organizations from across the state. Sponsors were highlighted in various media, both traditional and social, as well as to a large and motivated group of child advocates in attendance.





KID GOVERNOR® ELECTED

Oklahoma's Kid Governor® is a national award-winning civics program led by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy (OICA) and created by The Connecticut Democracy Center. Fifth graders across the state learn about state government, voting, and the importance of civic engagement through a real election for Oklahoma's Kid Governor.

Each registered Kid Governor® school is eligible to nominate one (1) student to run for the position of Oklahoma's Kid Governor. Teachers will submit the nominee's video to OICA and seven (7) final candidates will advance to the Statewide Election. The winner of the Statewide Election will serve as the next Kid Governor and the other six (6) candidates will serve as the Cabinet. All seven students will serve a one-year term from January-December. Learn more at OK.KidGovernor.org.



School nominees and their families must: carefully review this document; agree to fulfill the responsibilities of the Kid Governor and Cabinet, if elected; complete the enclosed forms; and submit the required nomination materials to OICA. This year's submission deadline is posted at OK.KidGovernor.org and can be found in the *Annual Startup Guide*.

Mila O'Brien of Enid's Prairie View Elementary School was elected Oklahoma's fifth Kid Governor®. She was inaugurated in a State Capitol ceremony on the first day of the 2023 session of the Oklahoma Legislature with three former Oklahoma Governors in attendance, George Nigh, David Walters, and Frank Keating

For opportunities to sponsor Oklahoma's Kid Governor®, contact OICA CEO Joe Dorman at jdorman@oica.org or 405-236-5437.



2022 - A YEAR OF ADVOCACY

As we do every year, in early 2022, OICA released its “Children’s Legislative Agenda,” a comprehensive document outlining the priorities of the state’s child advocates developed during the 2021 Fall Forum and finalized by OICA’s Advocacy Committee. It was a blueprint for our efforts at the State Capitol throughout the session and beyond.

OICA’S 2022 Legislative Scorecard gave Oklahoma voters critical information on how their lawmakers voted on those issues embodied in the “Children’s Legislative Agenda” – the issues most important to the state’s children. Knowledge is power, and Oklahoma’s voters were armed with the most important power they can wield in the fight for children.

Throughout the year, OICA kept Oklahomans fully apprised of children’s issues through an aggressive media program, putting children’s issues front-and-center at every opportunity. From the CEO’s weekly column to regular appearances as a subject-matter expert on matters relating to children and child welfare, OICA is both top-of-mind and active in keeping Oklahoma’s children at the forefront.

2023 - A NEW OPPORTUNITY

OICA is collaborating with the Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma to distribute an informational brochure to public schools in 20 counties to help qualifying families enroll for SoonerCare benefits. The purpose of the grant is to increase the insurance rates among children and families in those 20 counties.

OICA will work with the schools to determine the best way to distribute the brochures to the schools and to the parents. This will include visiting with the administration of each school to determine appropriate ways to distribute printed materials through the teachers that will then be sent home with the students to the parents/guardians. This will also include determining other ways to reach parents/guardians through school communications, such as emails, newsletters, local newspapers and phone systems/texting.





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***On behalf of the
entire staff of the
Oklahoma Institute for
Child Advocacy,
we thank the members
of the
Board of Directors for
their dedication and
commitment to our
mission.***