



More than 240 people attended InspirationField's annual meeting. COURTESY PHOTO

# InspirationField celebrates year, new building

Christmas spirit was in the air at the recent 47th Anniversary of InspirationField's Annual Meeting and Dinner.

Chief Executive Officer Johnnie DeLeon started the night off by welcoming the large crowd of 240 people to the dinner and couldn't be more happy then to welcome them standing in the Commons Area of InspirationField's new facility. DeLeon stated, "So this is what it looks like when dreams come true." Jeff Warren gave a comforting blessing which was followed by a moment of silence and a memorial slideshow presented by Caitlin Coffield, Community Relations Manager.

The business meeting resulted in retention of the current board members, including Jim Clawson - president, John Gallegos - vice-president, Melvina Skinner - secretary, and Midge Cranson - treasurer.

Coffield recognized the many volunteers and countless hours that they have given to the events held by InspirationField.

Coffield presented a group of volunteers with a thank you card and \$25 gift card for the passion they give to the agency year after year. Coffield then invited Day Program Professional Cassie Wilkens to the stage to sing "Jingle Bells" and Cassie was joined by her father Butch Frazier on guitar.

DeLeon next welcomed new Mayor Lynn Horner and reminded the crowd that Horner also serves as vice president of the Housing Board for InspirationField. Horner gave a nice speech about his plan for the city, and how every time he walks into the building at 612 Adams Ave., he sees the faces of the staff and individuals so lit up with passion for what they do, that it is always a joy to see.

Sharon Church, case management director, then presented a fun slideshow displaying pictures of the Children's Program and the fun they had throughout the year. Church then was joined by DeLeon and recognized the members of

three volunteer groups such as: Human Rights Committee, Arkansas Valley Local Interagency Council, and Family Support Council. Church presented each volunteer with a thank you card and InspirationField Travel Mug.

Coffield took back the stage to present a slideshow that she created to recap all the fun activities that the agency participated in, including different trips, tournaments, etc. Then, continuing with fun and Christmas bliss was Wilkens again with her father singing "Silent Night" and the crowd joining in to add a peaceful moment to the night.

Church once again recognized the clients with awards in the following categories: Audrey Eubanks/Most Enthusiastic, Tabitha Alford/Most Improved Work Skills, John Gallegos/Most Independent and Morton Gauna/Community Service Award. Each individual was presented with a certificate and \$125 cash for the goals that they have

worked so hard to reach.

DeLeon and Coffield then took the time to say thank you to the InspirationField board of directors and the three Housing Board members of InspirationField. They each were presented with a picture collage and a \$25 gift card for the time, commitment and heart they bring to everyone at the agency. As a nice ending to the thank you, Lynette Ramirez, case manager shared her wonderful talent of playing the saxophone and shared "The Christmas Song" for the crowd to enjoy.

A very important moment came next. Rosa Salo, chief financial officer shared an incredible slideshow of the four individuals who were nominated to win the Inspiration Award. With interviews given by fellow staff and individuals, it was quite clear why these outstanding staff were standing on the stage. Salo presented the Inspiration Award to David Garcia, Cleaning Crew Leader for coming to InspirationField and showing his leadership and hard work. Garcia received a \$500 bonus and a plaque and was also presented a birthday cake as a nice addition.

Julia Hoepfner, Adult Services Director then invited anyone from the crowd to come up and share any concerns, joys, etc. or just wish everyone a Merry Christmas. As soon as the last person spoke, Pink Lightning took the stage - a group of staff and individuals who won the InspirationField St. Patrick's Talent Show. It was the highlight to the evening and "Grease Lightning" played throughout the commons.

As the evening came to a close, DeLeon presented a slideshow showing the complete process of the new facility, from the ground breaking ceremony, the construction process and ending with the grand opening. It was just the thing to prove that dreams do come true!