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Crisis Center Unit, Surrounded by Bedrooms



Basement Lobby

Contributed Images

Renderings of, left, the crisis center unit at the Youth Recovery Center, and, right, the center's basement lobby.

Bert Nash gets a \$25K gift for Youth Recovery Center



Josie Heimsoth/Journal-World Photo

Bert Nash staff stands with a \$25,000 award from Security Benefit on Monday.

By JOSIE HEIMSOOTH
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The Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center has received a \$25,000 donation to help it build a new Youth Recovery Center, and designs for the facility at Clinton Parkway and Kasold Drive are progressing.

Leaders of Bert Nash and other stakeholders gathered Monday morning for the announcement that the Topeka-based financial services firm Security Benefit had agreed to donate \$25,000 to the Judge Jean Shepherd Youth Recovery Center, set to be located at 3500 Clinton Place.

"Many of our families live in Lawrence and the surrounding

Contributed Image
A rendering of the Youth Recovery Center building.



Contributed Image

A rendering shows a lobby and reception area of the Youth Recovery Center.

area, and some are also affected by mental health challenges within their own families," Richard Wells, senior vice president and head of operations at Security Benefit, said.

"... We're confident that the Youth Recovery Center will make stressful situations more bearable for burdened children and their families and help ensure strong outcomes that will help positive generational impact."

See BERT NASH, A7



View from Northwest

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VOL. 168 / NO. 28 / 18 PAGES



Partly sunny | High: 40° | Low: 25° | Forecast, B8

CLASSIFIED

B3-B4

DATEBOOK

B4

OPINION

A4

COMICS

B6-B7

DEATHS

A2

PUZZLES

A5, B5

SPORTS

B1

TV LISTINGS

B8



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Panasonic plant now has about 1,400 workers; it previously promised 4,000

Hiring fair planned this week

By BREMEN KEASEY
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Currently, the Panasonic plant on Kansas Highway 10 in De Soto has less than half of its previously promised target of 4,000 employees, but company officials will be holding a hiring fair this week and hope to hire "several hundred" more skilled machine technicians over the next three months.

As the Journal-World reported, the nearly 5 million-square-foot electric vehicle battery factory opened in De Soto, about 20 minutes east of Lawrence, last July. Leaders with the company told the Journal-World at the time that they expected it would reach its full capacity of 4,000 employees within 18 months.

On Monday, Kristen Walters, the vice president of human resources for Panasonic Energy, told the Journal-World that the plant has about 1,400 employees so far. But the company hopes that number will grow after a hiring fair at the plant, 10301 Astra Parkway in De Soto, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday. Walters said the company is hoping to give out 100 offers at the fair.

See PANASONIC, A7

Child care tuition at Ballard Center will now be based on families' income

It's also working to improve employees' wages & benefits

By JOSIE HEIMSOOTH
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To help make child care more affordable for local families, Lawrence's Ballard Center is trying a new approach — capping tuition at 7% of a household's income.

In a news release, the Ballard Center said that 1 in 4 families in the community live paycheck to paycheck, and the average Kansas family spends

20% of their income on child care. But with its new model, the Ballard Center will review each family's gross household income and ensure that no family pays more than 7% of that amount. The center will also assess families' eligibility for child care assistance through the state Department for Children and Families.

"They have a certain amount that they will assist with, and if your income is higher than that amount, you're not eligible. If your income is lower, you are eligible," Will Averill, chief operating officer of the Ballard Center, said. "And we'll look at 7% of what their gross income is, and then we will charge them 7%, but then the rest of it will be covered by DCF if they are eligible."

See BALLARD, A7

CLASSIFIED

B1

SPORTS

B8