

BCRC's Work Ready Program Receives High Marks

by Amanda Pullinger

Program monitoring can be one of the most laborious and stressful times for agency staff. However, it can be gratifying when positive marks are returned and diligent efforts are recognized. BCRC's Work Ready Program received such a result with a "commendable" rating for overall performance when monitored in October 2011.

Two components of BCRC's Work Ready Program- Outreach and Supported Work- were monitored by the Bureau of Employment and Training Programs for the state of Pennsylvania. Work Ready is a vocational training program that seeks to assist individuals to move from cash assistance to self-sufficiency. Staff was both delighted and grateful to receive the "commendable" rating, a mark that is not readily given. Kay Podbielski, Director of Community Programs at BCRC, states, "The Community Services Program of Beaver

County actually holds the contract with the state for the Work Ready program. BCRC is sub-contracted to run the program for the county. When we do well, this is a direct reflection of the quality of services that our county provides."

The monitoring report highlighted multiple areas in which BCRC's Supported Work Program and Outreach Services were exemplary, such as their medical benefit rate, job retention rate, and work activity rate.

During the past program year, Work Ready moved from New Brighton to Center Place, a transition that did not go unnoticed by monitors. The new location was labeled a "state-of-the art facility" that provides the "comforts of an environment that is conducive for education, employment, and training."

Miranda Booth, Income Improvement Specialist, states that, "It's both an honor and privilege to receive a commendable rating. The program involves a collaborative effort and it brings significant gratification to know that we are working together efficiently and effectively." ■

BCRC Staff are SELFless in Their Commitment to Safety

by Frank Shialabba

Once again our Safety Santa, Jolly old Bobba-Nick (Bob Nicol), and his elves spread cheer and safety knowledge to the clients of BCRC during the Christmas season. Representing the BCRC Safety Committee and its commitment to a safe BCRC, Santa and his helpers gave out daily planners, donated by our insurance company Knighthawk Insurance. ELFrícia (Patricia) Sullivan talked about fires and the safe use of candles. ChELFea (Chelsea) Benedict stressed the importance of hand washing to prevent disease. ELFinia (Virginia) Chaklos talked about the importance of safe practices when using Christmas lights, and last, but in no way least, the Elfmeister hisELF (Kris Scanlon) gave tips on pedestrian safety. Thanks to our Safety Committee, BCRC staff and clients once again enjoyed a safe Christmas season! ■



Pictured from left to right: Bob Nicol, Pat Sullivan, Chelsea Benedict, Virginia Chaklos and Kris Scanlon.

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH SPEAK OUT

*by Mike Little and
Gloria Beighey*

A mild December and January have passed by with great enthusiasm as John Anslin and Beth Hradecky have been named Employees of the Month.

December's winner, John Anslin is well liked at BCRC. He has been with BCRC for approximately one year and he wishes to continue working here.

John's bright smile and zest for life shine through each day. His face lights up when he mentions that his favorite jobs at BCRC are placing magnets and tearing apart plastic sleeves.

John is very excited about his award. One of his favorite words is "awesome" and that is exactly how he describes his feelings about winning. He feels that his good work helped him to be named Employee of the Month.

Frances Beth Hradecky, Employee of the Month for January, has been working at BCRC, off and on, since 2005. Known to her coworkers as Beth, she loves working, especially at BCRC.

Beth feels her best attributes are being on time for work and completing her assigned jobs. She likes assembling magnets, taking apart plastic sleeves and working with the janitorial crew.

Beth feels "great" about winning the award, and she would like to acquire a competitive cleaning job in the future. ■

Safety Lights

by Cindy Kirkpatrick



Texting & Driving Outlawed

Effective March 8, 2012, Pennsylvanians will not be permitted to text while driving. The fine for violating the law will be \$50.00. Senate Bill 314 is categorized as a “primary” law which means that an officer can pull you over for the offense without having to witness some other violation. Currently, talking on a handheld cell phone is permitted. ■

WIN Clients Take Aim at Area Unemployment

by Frank Shialabba

Don't tell WIN Services' staff about our country's bleak economic outlook. Eight WIN participants found competitive employment during the last few weeks.

Alan Jones, who found a job at a supermarket, received benefits counseling designed to allay his fear of losing his medical card and disability benefits. Alan learned that he could work and still maintain his medical coverage. He works 20 hours per week, while attending a GED “prep” course at Career Link.

Jerry Huff works full-time, rebuilding train brakes for a Leetsdale employer. He feels great to be working at a job that utilizes his mechanical abilities.

Durrell Powell was recently hired by a new grocery store chain. He is responsible for maintaining store cleanliness, and that is particularly important at a grocery store.

Dustin Taylor was hired as a grocery bagger. He is also responsible for trash removal, returning item to the shelves, and gathering carts from the parking lot. He is an excellent ▶

Spotlight On: Kim Hildman

by Jennifer Gengarella

Job Coach Kim Hildman loves the students in BCRC's School to Work program, and they love her. Students, who are approaching graduation, come to BCRC for evaluation and job experiences in preparation for competitive employment. Kim has worked with BCRC for nine years, and she has spent the last two years with the School to Work Program.

One of Kim's favorite things about the program is getting to work with new students every year. Kim assists the students as they work on different contracts such as magnets, prepping documents for shredding and removing ID's from folders. These are invaluable work experiences that will help the students after graduation.

Kim helps the students “get off on the right foot” as they prepare for their future. They gain work experiences with Kim that will help them throughout their lives.

BCRC is proud of the experience, care, and concern that Kim provides to the students. We also offer our congratulations as she anxiously awaits the birth of her first granddaughter this spring. ■



He's a Survivor

by Frank Shialabba

Brad Narad is an eminently likable and totally employable individual who has shared many ups and downs with BCRC's Supported Employment services.

According to Sheila Silbaugh, Director of Win Services, who has known Brad for many years, “Brad has had a variety of jobs over the years. Unfortunately some of his past employers have gone out of business or had other difficulties. Brad is very resilient, however, and everything he does is excellent. He has done an outstanding job wherever he has been, never missing a day of work. He often must walk to work, and he's even been bitten by a dog. Nothing deters him from his job, however.”

Brad worked on a janitorial crew for three years. He began by gathering garbage from the offices. Eventually, Brad became the cleaning crew's “right hand man.” He trained new employees on the “finer points” of janito-

rial work like running the floor buffer. Just as Brad began to excel in his job, his company lost the cleaning contract and Brad had to move on.

Brad's current job involves cleaning at the Department of Motor Vehicles in Rochester, PA. He has been assigned this very important PIBH contract because, according to Ms. Silbaugh, “his work ethics are far and above that of most people. He is very independent and needs no prompting to complete his work assignments.” WIN Program Specialist Kristi Schwartz states, “In addition to cleaning the exam rooms, lunchroom and bathrooms, Brad is responsible for replenishing supplies. He must tell staff when cleaning supplies need to be ordered, and he does this very conscientiously.”

According to Job Coach, Linda Smega, who worked with Brad at Goodwill Industries, “Brad is a very nice young man who does a very nice job.” This simple description fittingly describes this unassuming young man, whose ups and downs have led to extraordinary accomplishments. ■

Come One, Come All

by Pat Healey

Come one, Come all. Visit BCRC's Gifts Delivered and see our innovative new items for 2012.

Starting off the parade of new gifts are spirit bracelets and birthday cakes. The bracelets are made by BCRC clients from individual beads. Colors can easily be matched to organization and school colors. The delightful birthday "cakes" are made from popular snack candy and have a candy stick candle in the center. They can easily be customized and made from your personal candy favorites.

Illuminated glass blocks, available in previous years, have now transformed into lighted scare crows for Halloween and bright, happy snowmen for Christmas.

Beautiful new metal lanterns come in two finishes, copper and black, with "flickering" wax candles. These candles have two settings. They can be set to ON/OFF or a timer can be set to stay on for six hours at a time.



Gifts Delivered Embroidery also offers blankets that can be initialed and personalized. These beautiful cover-ups are made from sweatshirt type fleece. Sixteen different colors of blankets and hundreds of thread colors make this a gift that can be matched to any décor.

Keepsake baby blankets are disguised as fluffy animals, and they will keep all the important information about a new baby. The baby's name, birthdate, height and weight are recorded in embroidery on each blanket.

Environmentally conscious BCRC is currently developing "SCRAP BAGS". These vanity bags are made from scrap materials, old clothes, placemats, etc. Once constructed, bags are embroidered and can be personalized with matching embellishments or monograms.

Visit Gifts Delivered at 1517 Sixth Ave., New Brighton, Monday through Friday until 4:00 pm to see our new line of exciting products. You can also call Susan Hill for custom candy or silk arrangements or Pat Healey for embroidered or personalized items. Both can be reached at 724-847-1306. ■



Pat Healey shows Sherry Lombardo the assembly process for the new spirit bracelets.

employee.

John Koehler was hired at ▶ a molding company without an interview. He has proven himself to be a reliable worker.

Michael Funovitz is employed by a local advertising firm. He works on the computer excel sheet and folds and stuffs envelopes for their many mailings. He works three days a week and is very happy with his new job.

Michael Ritchie is detailing cars and limousines at a local car rental business. He has a positive attitude, and he greets everyone with a smile and a warm hello.

Finally, Jamie St. Esprit has been employed by a cleaning company. Jamie has a fast pace when cleaning and she gets many compliments for her work. ■

Laura Competes and Wins!

BCRC staff person Laura Medarac is a winner. She was chosen out of many applicants to participate in the Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) training program. The training is sponsored by the PA Department of Corrections (PADOC), PA Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) and the PA Department of Labor and Industry Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

The training is part of a comprehensive re-entry initiative that helps communities meet the needs of their offender and ex-offender populations. The course helps participants provide skills like career planning, job placement, job retention, and career advancement to offenders and ex-offenders.

This training satisfies the requirements for Global Career Development Facilitator, an internationally recognized certification. ■

Showcase Participants Reach for the Stars

by Kelly Newhouse

WIN Services of BCRC is making preparations for a "Showcase of Talent" at New Horizon School in late April. The event will give each person an opportunity to display his or her special gifts. This showcase will also help individuals meet goals such as building self-esteem, developing new interests, and increasing independence.

One way participants prepare for the showcase is through participation in the new wellness program that began at WIN in February. This program helps individuals make positive lifestyle changes through diet, physical activity and expanding areas of

interest and knowledge. The program also gives participants an opportunity to develop their talents for the big event. WIN staff industriously help participants prepare for their roles in the event, working toward a flawless production.

The theme of the showcase is finding that special something that each person can do well. The search for one's special gifts begins by watching other people share their talents in a variety of settings. It is the hope of the WIN participants and staff that everyone watching the event will discover their own talents and strengths.

Watch for further details, and join us as we showcase the talent of nearly 50 individuals who promise to shine as they reach for the stars. ■



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Shop Talk

by Kay Podbielski

Four hundred people attended the BCRC Christmas party which was held this year at the Monaca Turners. The party, which is sponsored in part by the Antoline Foundation, just gets bigger and better every year. As always, the dance floor was rocking with the tunes of disc jockey Chuck Webb while the bingo tables were filled with enthusiastic players. A magic show was the featured entertainment, followed by a delicious buffet luncheon and the annual awards ceremony.

We are already looking forward to the annual BCRC picnic. Mark your calendars for June 15, 2012!■



Spring Sign Language Level one will be offered on Mondays, April 16 to May 21 from 5:15 pm to 7:15 pm. Class will be held at the Aurora Bldg, 363 Third Street., Beaver, PA. (enter through the side door that says Aurora Services).

The Cost is \$40 for the six week class and materials. To register contact Ashley Greenawalt at 724-775-2298 or agreenawalt@bcrc.net.■



Individuals at BCRC perform a variety of services for the community. Outsourcing services include mailing, assembly, drilling, shredding, digital imaging, microfilming, weighing, inspecting, packing, refurbishing, sorting, gauging, deburring, tapping and heat sealing. For more information on BCRC's business services call 724-847-1306. For production services ask for Joanna Greco; for mailing and shredding ask for Frank Sniezek; and for embroidering, digital imaging and microfilming contact Pat Healey.■

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