



The Competitive Edge

BCRC, Inc., 131 Pleasant Drive, 2nd Floor, Aliquippa, PA 15001-3515

Spring 2016 Edition, Volume XXIII Issue 1

School to Work Students Make Lanterns Glow

by Zachary Carroll



Courtney Hall cleaning the lantern's glass.

BCRC's School to Work students are making a contribution to this year's Christmas festivities at Old Economy Village. Over the past few months the students have been disassembling and cleaning over 300 lanterns that are used during Old Economy's Christmas celebration.

Every Thursday several students volunteer at Old Economy Village in Ambridge, PA to work on the lanterns. While working on the lantern project the students have enhanced life skills such as communication with others, teamwork, patience, following directives, goal setting, and time management. The students have shown that they can be a positive influence on their peers by encouraging productive results. Through working on the lanterns, students build confidence in their capabilities by exhibiting the skills needed to follow through and complete a project. The students also assist with painting, gardening, raking leaves, and preparing for events at Old Economy Village throughout the year.

The School to Work students have been volunteering at Old Economy Village for many years, and they look forward to many more years to come. Next time you see the lanterns during Christmas at Old Economy think about the part that BCRC's School to Work students played in making them shine. ■

Justina's Star Shines Brightly Again

by Frank Shialabba

Some stars shine so brightly that they rarely experience adversity. Such was the case with WIN participant Justina Yothers.

Justina was always the "best at everything" in school and in the BCRC School to Work programs. She excelled at BCRC's Goodwill program, and looked forward excitedly to her first competitive job in the community. However, Justina found that expectations were high in community employment. The requirements and speed expected at her first job were a big adjustment. Through it all, Justina maintained the same drive to succeed that made her so successful in the past.

With the guidance of BCRC's WIN staff, Justina learned that it was okay to have job accommodations that would help her succeed. According to WIN Director, Sheila Silbaugh, "Justina's employer, the National Network of Digital Schools, was more than willing to make those accommodations." Silbaugh is proud of the progress made by Justina at NNDS. She states "Justina learned how to be a star again. She accepted and faced adversity and conquered it through her will to succeed. It's been exciting to watch her grow. She is a steady worker who is very serious about her work. There are days when she attends WIN programming in the morning and then goes to work in the evening. This makes for a very long day, but Justina takes it in stride. She takes pride in what she does and it shows."

WIN Program Specialist, Krista Peace states, "Justina has worked for the same employer since November 2011. She has ▶

established herself as a dependable employee, arrives to work on time and always meets her commitments."

Justina Yothers has once again taken her place as a star in the firmament of WIN participants who have excelled at competitive employment. ■

Roses Are Labor of Love

by Marisa Scalamogna

Here at the Gifts Delivered Franchise Candy Bouquet, a rose is not just a rose! Clients take pride in making the candy roses crafted with floral tape to hold it all together.

Our roses have warmed the hearts of friends and sweethearts. They have cheered patients at Heritage Valley Health System in Beaver and decorated tables as wedding favors. The roses have been "delivered" as center pieces for baby showers and placed in champagne flutes for rehearsal dinners.

Three hundred and fifty of our roses were taken to the Unique Source Nettie Mann Achievement Award Banquet in Harrisburg to decorate the tables. Most recently, 100 of our roses traveled to Pittsburgh for a Cystic Fibrosis Foundation event at the Omni William Penn.

A rose is NOT just a rose to our Candy Bouquet workers; a rose is a blossoming labor of love that enables BCRC to have a sweet reputation all across our state! ■



Sarah Holly displaying a rose.



Spotlight on:
Laura Medarac, One Great Lady!
by Kelly Newhouse

BCRC participants are served at four different sites that are managed by one great lady, Laura Medarac, BCRC's Facilities Manager. She manages the buildings and grounds with great care and dedication.



Laura started working at BCRC as a job coach, moved to job developer and case manager, then to facilities coordinator, and was recently appointed to facilities manager. Her former background in real-estate as a property manager and work in project development is very valuable in her effort to maintain all BCRC properties. One of the things she likes most about her job is having the opportunity to make sure staff

and participants have the best working environment they can in order to do their jobs well and comfortably. She enjoys the responsibility of keeping everyone safe and happy while working at our facilities. She never runs out of energy and is tireless in performing her duties.

Laura recently had a major project at the Aurora building in Beaver when a pipe burst causing flooding on all of three floors. To her credit and the credit of the employees at both WIN and Aurora Psychiatric Services, programming continued unabated while repairs and renovation took place. Laura tackled this problem with her usual calm and positive attitude and the restoration was quick and impressive.

In addition to enjoying her work at BCRC, Laura loves family time very much. She is a self-described "family girl." She loves spending time with her husband Steve and enjoys being a big part of her twin's college careers as they prepare for their future. She also sparkles when talking about her golden retriever "Izzy" and her newest addition, Graham the cat. ■

**BCRC Introduces
Parent Coaching**
by Laurel Baker

BCRC continues to explore new ventures, and a recent addition is the service of parent coaching. The BC Scores grant, has led to the development of more services for youth, and parent coaching will provide an opportunity to support the parents of the youth impacted by the grant. Parent coaching is a strength-based model that encourages improved problem solving skills within the home and family, and to bolster confidence in parenting techniques. This approach operates on the assumption that a family crisis is an opportunity for growth.

Maureen Hawk, Susan Smith, and Malinda Zak were able to participate in the rigorous, 40 hour training to become Certified Parent Coaches, recognized by the International Coach Federation, an organization dedicated to maintaining high standards for credentialing. The staff worked diligently to excel and pass the training, and all three received certification.

Parent coaching recognizes that people are more likely to achieve their goals when they are in a healthy environment that nurtures and supports their endeavors. ■

Safety Lights: Bicycle Safety
by Cindy Kirkpatrick

Did you know that when you ride a bicycle on the road you must follow the same traffic signs and signals that cars do? Did you know that you should ride on the road in the same direction as the traffic is moving? Bicycling is a popular outdoor activity; however, most riders do not follow the rules, making this a major reason for bicycle accidents. Before jumping on that bike this spring, learn about the rules for sharing the roads with other vehicles. Remember, safety first! And by the way, don't forget that helmet. ■



Keandre Receives Awards in Style
by Marjorie Marcellus

A stylish Keandre Johnson, Big Beaver Falls Area School District student, has won several awards at his school district and BCRC during the last year.

Keandre's dedication to BCRC's School to Work program enabled him to win the Employee of the Month for September 2015, and Student Employee of the Year for 2015. Keandre was also honored by the Big Beaver Falls School Board in January 2016 for accomplishments in STW, his school district, and the community.

Keandre, a senior, has worked in the School to Work Department at BCRC since 2014. Always positive and friendly, Keandre has developed good work relationships with his peers and staff. Over the years, Keandre has worked and volunteered in an array of areas from working in the production center, completing mailings in the training room, and records management; to volunteering his time in the community. Keandre has excelled in all areas of the program. He is versatile, dependable, and eager to learn new work experiences each day; and he is always up to the challenge of adjusting to a change in the schedule. ■



L to R: Mr. Richard Johnson (father), Ms. Susan Smith, (School Board member and BCRC Program Specialist), Dr. Donna Nugent (Superintendent), Keandre Johnson, Mrs. Shelly Reiser (Learning Support teacher), Ms. Cynthia Cook (School Board President).

Thanks for the Memories ...by Frank Shialabba

After providing 44 years of fun and social opportunities for persons with disabilities, BCRC's social program "Rec Night" will come to an end this April, 2016. It is an exciting time as many opportunities exist today that were not available when the program started in 1972.

For many years "Rec Night" was the only weekly source of socialization for persons with intellectual disabilities in Beaver County. Change is inevitable, however, and today there are many sources of socialization. One-to-one habilitation provides the opportunity for people to attend social events that are integrated and a regular part of our community. People can attend events like professional sports games, concerts, plays, etc. both in Beaver County and the surrounding communities. Opportunities to attend integrated events have become a regular part of life for persons with disabilities, and social experiences are now more abundant and varied than they have ever been.

Therefore, it is time to say goodbye to "Rec Night," a program that has been very dear to my heart. I will always cherish my time with those who have attended the program over the years. I would like to thank the BCRC staff for their many years of hard work, Paulette Miller and Samuel Lippincott for their steadfast support and the many people with disabilities who have brought so much joy to my life. ■



Ode to Sam

by Frank Shialabba

**A Tribute to former BCRC Executive Director,
Samuel Lippincott, who passed away in December 2015.**

*Sam lived life to the fullest
And he loved to laugh and have fun.
He cherished his time with the BCRC clients
And during his 17 years as Director a great deal was done.*

*He established a new workshop
During his time at the top,
And it was his hope that
The growth of BCRC's clients would never stop.*

*Sam relished time with family and friends
As the most important thing in life,
And he loved showing and breeding dogs,
A passion he shared with Lois, his wife.*

*He shared a vision with Bill Lintz Sr.
That people with disabilities could truly have a place,
And he and Bill Lintz Jr. prepared
A Beaver Falls church to become the very first workshop
space.*

*Sam made a difference in the lives of others
During his Executive Director days,
And would often chuckle when Joe Lintz
Greeted him with "Hey Lippincott, give me a raise!"*

*Sam loved to talk about his hopes and dreams for BCRC
With a group of retired BCRC men,
Who came to appreciate his generosity
And his gift of truly being a friend.*



*There are friends, family and people with disabilities
Lining up to greet Sam as he begins his heavenly days,
And yes I can hear that hearty laugh
As Joe Lintz is still after that raise. ■*

Paulette Miller Celebrates 40 Years of Service

by Bonnie Boguszewski

This winter, Executive Director, Paulette Miller, celebrated her 40th anniversary at BCRC, Inc., and BCRC celebrated appropriately.

At the November board meeting, the members of the board presented Paulette with a special gift and a surprise cake. In addition to the board's celebration, the managers and department leaders threw a surprise luncheon for her in December.

Paulette has worked at BCRC since 1975, serving as Executive Director since 1990. During her time of leadership, BCRC has added services for people who are deaf, community job placement and job coaching, school to work transition services, a wellness program, a psychiatric rehabilitation program, and a payment agent program. ■



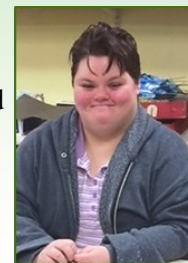
Katie Is Exemplary Team Member!

by Gina Alberti

BCRC's Katie Hanton, a tremendous team member, has tried and succeeded at many new work experiences recently! Katie first joined the BCRC family as a part of our School to Work program; and in 2002, she transitioned to our prevocational program.

Several months ago, Katie joined the Candy Bouquet team and has done an exemplary job. Initially, she was apprehensive about changing her schedule and working in the Administration Center's workshop. In no time, she had conquered these fears. Katie's case manager, Marisa Scalamogna, praises her dedication to the job and her willingness to try new tasks. According to Marisa, Katie quickly learned how to tip stems, attach one candy to the stem, place cellos, cut floral tape, and assemble price tags. She states, "Katie faces each task happily and works without distraction or excessive conversation. She is able to focus on her work no matter what else is happening, and she gets along well with an ensemble of different co-workers."

Recently, Katie visited community enclaves and is now a successful member of the janitorial team. She has come to enjoy leaving the facility and attempting new jobs. ■



Paulette Miller
Executive Director

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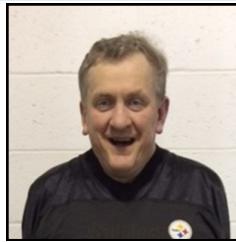
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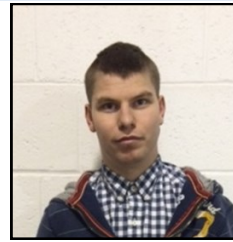
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Employee of the Month

Production Centers



Don Midon
November 2015



Calvin Palombo
December 2015



Darrick Cockfield
January 2016

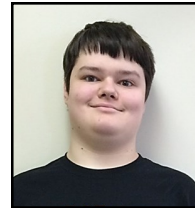
School to Work

Training Rm #1 Training Rm #2 Production Center

December 2015
January 2016
February 2016



Cierra Wise



Alex Belcher



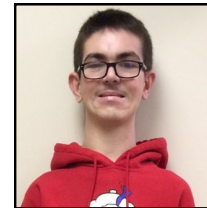
Trent Deak



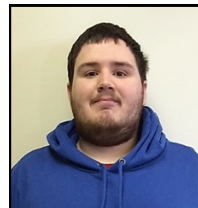
Madison Mercadante



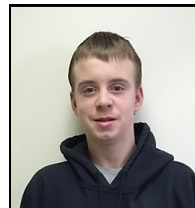
Joshua Rickard



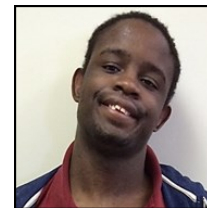
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Dakota Reed



Montana Boniphant



Terrance Parrish

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