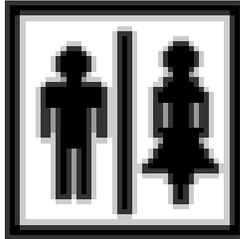


BCRC Receives New Grant

The Beaver County Office of Community Development recently awarded BCRC a grant to build a wheelchair accessible restroom at the 601 Production Center. The restroom will provide additional space for the new, larger motorized wheelchairs. Although existing restrooms meet ADA regulations for accessibility, motorized wheelchairs are getting larger and require more space to maneuver. The new restroom will be located on the work floor providing easier access. Director Marianne LaSalle, our ability to provide services. The project involves the part of an office into a handi-LaSalle hopes that construction in the very near future.



of the Production Center, thus, The author of the grant, Program states "The restroom will improve to a greater variety of people." conversion of a storage room and capped accessible restroom. Ms. tion on the new restroom will start

In addition to the new grant, the Office of Community Development continues to fund an employment Follow-Along program. This service allows BCRC to provide ongoing support to individuals after they have been placed in community jobs. According to Ms. LaSalle, "The Follow-Along grant has provided valuable support to many deserving individuals and it has increased their rate of job retention."

Muchas Gracias, Seniorita

by Frank Shialabba

The Center Township Taco Bell is a genuinely happy place. This Mexican themed, fast food restaurant is a pleasant combination of comfort, food and happy people. At the center of all this good cheer is Anita Montini. Anita found employment at Taco Bell with the help of BCRC's Supported Employment staff six years ago. BCRC staff person, Pat Healey attributes Anita's long employment to her "perfect temperament for Taco Bell." Taco Bell is a "people place" and Anita is a "people person." Anita possesses the kind of smile that lights up a room. "She is very generous with that smile and she genuinely loves her coworkers and customers."



Anita's even temperament has been a blessing as she handles the day-to-day stresses of dealing with the public. Anita has had many changes in her duties during her time at Taco Bell. She has gone from cleaning and stocking to working in the food preparation area. Anita is described as a "pleasure to work with" as she works the fryer and makes pizzas. Anita always manages to maintain "her beautiful smile and pleasant demeanor."

Anita's happy disposition is complimented by a strong work ethic. Supported Employment Program Specialist, Sheila Silbaugh, says that Anita "always shows up, is always on time, and always does her work." According to Ms. Silbaugh, Anita "is very dependable and required very little training." Anita has made her employers at Taco Bell very happy for the last six years.



Deservedly, Anita has received some of the happiness that she has given to others. She has found satisfaction in her personal life as well as in her job. When she is not working, Anita spends many happy hours sightseeing throughout Pennsylvania with her boyfriend.

It is very gratifying to everyone at BCRC to see her doing so well. To Anita, we would just like to say "Muchas gracias seniorita. It has been a great pleasure working with you."

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Employees of the Month Profiled

by Karen Buccelli, Lavinia Craft, Mike Little, Sherry Lombardo, and Carol McCullough

Ron Hoffman, Employee of the Month for August, has been with BCRC since 1989. Ron sets a good example for us all with his excellent attendance and positive attitude. He feels very good about winning this award and is sure his determination and hard work were two factors that help him to succeed. When asked what he sees himself doing in the future, he indicates he wants to work at BCRC for as long as possible. His Job Coach, Mary Jane Hudak, says, "Ron is very nice to work with. He is an excellent worker and will do anything you ask him to do".



Congratulations also go out to Jim Elliott who was named the Employee of the Month for September. Jim takes great pride in his work and reports, "I'm proud of myself for winning this award." Jim has worked at BCRC for 27 years. He spends his four day work week building shipping boxes in the morning and working on key ways in the afternoon. His BCRC Job Coach, Joan Bell depends on him greatly and finds him to be extremely neat and a hard worker. Joan remarks, "He's a really nice guy!"

Employees (con't)



October's Employee of the Month, Darrick Cockfield, has some excellent advice for all of us about good work habits. "You work hard at your job and have a good attitude," reports Darrick. Darrick is very proud of being named Employee of the Month for October and is particularly excited about the certificate BCRC gave him. Job Coach, Joan Bell, relies on Darrick to help out with anything she asks him to do. She finds him to be very kind and helpful to all his co-workers. Darrick has been at BCRC for quite a long time and also likes to work out in the community.



These gentlemen offer good lessons to follow. Hard working, dependable, helpful and courteous are all traits Darrick, Jim and Ron seem to share. They take pride in what they do each day and are great assets to BCRC. All three are certainly deserving of the title "Employee of the Month".



Safety Highlighted During Safety Celebration

by Cindy Kirkpatrick



BCRC celebrated its 14th Annual Safety Day on October 6, 2004. The event was sponsored by this year's Safety Committee. Aerial Fire Systems' owner, Jack Skrlac, presented the in-service on fire extinguisher training and fire safety. All clients and staff were oriented on general fire safety and extensive fire extinguisher usage and guidelines. A question and answer period followed. Lastly, all interested parties were given the opportunity to operate a fire extinguisher. As in years past, Karnavas Vending stocked our cold and hot vending machines with safety cups and offered free drinks throughout the day. Additionally, on October 8th the New Brighton Fire Department brought their new aerial fire truck and gave a detailed presentation of all the truck's features and various fire fighting equipment.



Project Success is "Model" Program

by Kathleen Ayers



On September 18th and 19th BCRC's Supported Work Program ("Project Success") Case Manager, Dawna Bott and Employment Specialist, Kathleen Ayers, were invited to present an overview of Project Success to the Southeast Regional Community Action Association Program (CAAP) Training Seminar in Pittsburgh. CAAP members from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia and Maryland attended.

Project Success was chosen as a 'model' Welfare-to-Work Program. The success of Project Success is partially due to a shift from the usual "go get a job-now" mentality, to a more holistic approach. The program focuses on identifying and solving the barriers that inhibit clients from getting and keeping a job. Case manager, Dawna Bott, identifies the individual's barriers to employment.

In addition, Project Success clients receive a detailed written Vocational Evaluation from Project Success Liaison, Kay Podbielski, a certified vocational evaluator and Cindy Kirkpatrick, a vocational evaluator and teacher. This evaluation helps Project Success staff discover the social, educational and vocational barriers of the clients, as well as their skills and abilities.



Once the individual barriers are identified, the client begins solving them, with the help of the many services provided by Project Success. SWP has an innovative online computer learning program to help individuals get their GED.

Many clients participate in Adkins Life Skills classes that included writing resumes, cover letters and effective interviewing techniques.

After employment, clients receive intense case management, while their employment is monitored for six months. If needed, clients are switched to "Extended Services." While in Extended Services the clients are eligible for funding for emergency situations.



The emphasis of BCRC's Project Success is helping people maintain employment in a satisfying and rewarding career.

Clients and Staff Celebrate Football Season

BCRC Clients and staff dressed in their favorite football jerseys on Monday, November 22 to celebrate the football season. The day featured football related activities, while clients received a gift from BCRC. Nachos and cheese were sold at lunch to benefit the client Christmas fund. While the Pittsburgh Steelers were the most prominent team, a number of other professional, college and high school teams were represented. The day generated a great deal of team spirit and camaraderie.



OVR and BCRC Work to Achieve Quality and Retention

OVR and BCRC Share Common Goals



A long standing relationship between the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has resulted in an outstanding record of job placement and job retention. According to Program Director, Marianne LaSalle, "OVR and BCRC work very well together. We have common goals and aspirations for the people we serve. OVR provides their expertise and financial support, and BCRC provides the direct support that individuals need to be successful."

Since July of 2003, BCRC has worked with OVR to place 56 people in competitive employment. More than 80% of persons placed during that period have retained their jobs. Mrs. LaSalle believes that OVR counselors take a sincere interest in every person they serve. This interest, combined with the dedication of BCRC staff, makes for a powerful partnership.

Mrs. LaSalle also believes that there is a strong commitment to finding quality employment for people. She cites statistics that show that more than 60% of individuals placed by BCRC have wages that exceed the minimum.

Job retention and quality jobs are lofty goals. They are obviously goals that are shared by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center.

BCRC Has "Friends Helping Friends"

BCRC staff raised \$500 for the client Christmas gift fund through the annual "Friends Helping Friends" fundraiser at Boscov's Department Store. Staff sold tickets which entitled the bearer to a 20% discount on selected items at the store. We thank the BCRC staff and "friends of BCRC," who contributed generously to the client Christmas gift fund.



Safety Lights Snow Shoveling Safety Tips



The following tips on shoveling snow are for your education, and are not intended as medical advice. Should you have questions or need medical advice, we strongly urge you to contact your health care professional prior to undertaking any strenuous activity.

Shoveling snow in cold weather puts significant stress on the body. People who are overweight, have high blood pressure, high cholesterol and/or diabetes have an even greater risk of heart attack if shoveling snow. Should you feel any of these conditions might exist, you would be wise to talk with a medical professional before shoveling snow or working out in the cold in general.

If you are going to shovel snow, please keep the following in mind:

- Avoid eating, drinking or smoking before shoveling.
- Stretch and warm up before beginning.
- Allow plenty of time to accomplish the task.
- Dress in layers keeping your hands and head covered. In severe cold, keep your face and ears also covered.
- Try to shovel snow while it is fresh and not yet packed down due to partial melting, driving over it, etc.
- Shovel snow in stages if there is a lot of snow. Take a top layer of snow away and then the lower level. Keep the shovel loads small and light.
- Try pushing the snow out of the way versus throwing it.
- If you must throw the shovel load of snow, lift with your legs and avoid twisting when throwing the snow.
- Take frequent breaks and drink water during breaks. Shoveling in cold weather will quickly cause dehydration.
- **STOP** shoveling immediately if you feel any tightness in your chest or tingling in your arms.

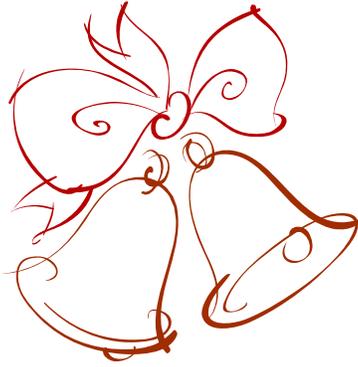


Practicing these safety tips will help reduce the risk of injury and allow you to enjoy the winter season. Please be careful if you must shovel snow.

School to Work Presentation Well Received

A presentation on October 14th by BCRC's School to Work staff was well received by the Local Transition Coordinating Council. The Council consists of representatives from each Beaver County school district, community agencies and other service providers. BCRC did a Power Point presentation which highlighted the unique and varied aspects of our School to Work program. BCRC has been acknowledged as an exceptional provider of School to Work services.





SHOP TALK

by Paula Cordes



BCRC's Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program, Aurora Rehabilitation, received full licensing for the first time in October. As a new program, Aurora had been on a provisional license.

Aurora assists individuals with psychiatric disabilities to increase their success and satisfaction in roles and environments of their choice. Participants are helped to move through three steps of development. They are asked to connect and engage with staff and other participants; participate in an assessment of their readiness to make changes; and move on to active change and development.

Aurora offers programs based on the needs of the individuals that they are serving at any particular point in time. Some of the most popular wellness groups currently offered by Aurora involve illness management in the areas of schizophrenia, bipolar illness and anxiety. Currently 60 persons with mental illness are served. Individuals may receive mobile services at a site of their choice or at Aurora's building at 363 Third Street, Beaver, PA.

For more information call 724-774-7603 or contact Marianne LaSalle at 724-847-1306.



Need a unique and beautiful gift for a special person on your Christmas list? Whether it's one gift or your entire Christmas list, Gifts Delivered has a wide assortment to choose from. For those gifts that need shipped, our Mailing Services Department will be happy to send your selection anywhere in the world. So stop on by and give "Gifts Delivered Featuring Candy Bouquet" a try.



A number of new staff recently joined the ranks at BCRC. Brenda Walsh, Program Specialist with the School to Work Program, started on August 31st. Peggy Sue Tribone (September 14th), Melba Johnson and Ilene New (October 11th) are our newest Job Coaches, while Chuck Hartman joined our IT Department on October 14th. Welcome to all!

Competitive Edge Editorial Staff

Kathleen Ayers, Paula Cordes,
Pam DePace, Jennifer Gengarella,
Pat Healey, Gary Hewitt,
Cindy Kirkpatrick, Kay Podbielski,
Frank Shialabba,
Pat Tengeres...layout

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Richard Sheffield, William Steele,
Commora Woodfork



*Have a wonderful Holiday Season
and a prosperous New Year!*

