



The Competitive Edge

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

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Chad Finds His Voice

by Frank Shialabba



Chad Lewandowski, a participant in BCRC's production center, has found his voice and his future. While communication hasn't always been easy for Chad, he has made his wishes for the future known, and to a great extent they have come true.

When the mobile work site an area laundry ended due to a change in company procedures, Chad no longer had the job that he loved. According to BCRC Program Specialist, Kelly Newhouse, "Chad loves to be busy and he loved his job in the laundry. He loved interacting with his coworkers, and was very good at the job. When the job ended, he missed it and his coworkers very much." According to Ms. Newhouse, "Chad just wasn't himself when his job ended. He needed be busy again doing something that he loved."

Initially, Chad found a job cleaning in the evenings. According to Ms. Newhouse, "The job was just not for Chad. Chad is a people person and he didn't enjoy working by himself. To his credit, he expressed his desire to find a different job."

With the help of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and BCRC's WIN Services, Chad was able to secure a position in a supermarket. According to Ms. Newhouse, "Chad loves his new job. He works two nights a week and still gets to work with his friends at BCRC during the day." According to his mother, "He's like the old Chad. He's so happy right now."

Chad is happy due the strength he found to express his life choices, and his ability to achieve them.

Annual Meeting Held

by Amanda Dodd

BCRC held its annual meeting of the corporation on November 21. Though board meetings are held on a quarterly basis, November's meeting focused on the past fiscal year as a whole, with all of its highlights and challenges.

Throughout the year, department heads work diligently to collect program data to disseminate and report to the board. Though the data collection process can be both difficult and time consuming for all staff involved, it is an essential component in making informed decisions regarding the future of BCRC.

BCRC Records Management Looking Forward to "New Digs"

by Pat Healey

Construction is almost complete for BCRC Records Management's new home in CenterPlace. Two large rooms in the middle of the building have been expertly transformed into four lovely new offices, a spacious hallway and a beautiful new workroom for scanners, copiers, computers and people vital to the business.

Securely housed on the second floor of BCRC's CenterPlace building, the new location provides industry demanded privacy and security to customer's documents. Limited staff access to the workroom will be permitted and business tours will be highly restricted as well. Locked entry doors with swipe card access improves security measures, and cameras in the new records workroom add to confidentiality and security.

Although the new workroom is smaller in size, efficiency will be increased by eliminating unnecessary steps and keeping work closer. Some pieces of equipment no longer in use will be stored in another location further increasing production by using space more wisely.

Closer proximity to Moon Township, The Pittsburgh International Airport, FedEx and UPS offers more business opportunities to BCRC records management.

BCRC Applies for CenterPlace Licensing

by Kelly Newhouse

In preparation for BCRC's relocation to CenterPlace, Kathy Davis, Director of Client Services, has been busy preparing for licensing of the building for vocational services. This is a methodical process involving the submission of multiple funding sources and service codes, and their definitions. Licensing is approved through the Bureau of Human Services, a division of The Department of Public Welfare. BCRC has submitted the required documentation for approval and is eagerly anticipating notification of the approved licensing for the new site. Once approval has been granted, BCRC will follow through with additional steps as required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Licensing is one more step in preparing for BCRC's move from the New Brighton sites into the new facility at 131 Pleasant Drive, Center Township. This move will bring together the many facets of BCRC under one roof allowing for the expansion of services and programming to our very valued and diverse consumers.



Spotlight on: Gloria Beighey

by Jennifer Gengarella

The smiling face greeting all who enter BCRC's administration building in New Brighton has been a fixture for almost 12 years. Gloria Beighey, also known as the Sheriff of BCRC for her vast knowledge of all happenings, assists visitors, staff, and clients alike. Keeping the front office flowing, answering phones, directing visitors, and helping clients require a real familiarity with all things BCRC. "Glo" handles all of this and then some with a "BCRC, how may I help you?" Gloria says that the part of her job that she likes the best is having lunch with BCRC's clients. She states, "They always light up my day." One of her more memorable moments came when, soon after starting, she thought the button in the front was to buzz visitors in. She found out differently after the police and fire department showed up!

Glo is quick to share stories and pictures of her family, including her husband of 43 years and 9 grandchildren! She is also the connoisseur of restaurants as she enjoys going out to eat whenever the opportunity presents itself. If you pop in BCRC's administration building, you'll be sure to encounter the ever present "sheriff" of BCRC. She may even recommend a restaurant for you to try.

BCRC Lights Up America

BCRC has a new contract in our production centers that is being distributed across the United States by a national chain. According to Susan Hill of BCRC's Gifts Delivered Featuring Candy Bouquet, "BCRC was approached by a representative of the company to create samples that can show people how to use a variety of store bought items to create an attractive holiday display."

Sixteen hundred samples are being created in the production centers by BCRC clients and according to Ms. Hill, "They involve a number of steps. Clients cut ribbon, make bows, insert electric lights, prepare a plastic plug, and print and fold directions." Ms. Hill states this was a job that gave opportunities to many people to participate in a national marketing venture. It was both exciting and challenging!"



Jackie Willis "joyfully" works as she readies a glass block "Christmas decoration" kit.

Aurora Staff Contribute to Round Table

Marie Krechowski of BCRC's Aurora Services participated in a round table discussion attended by local legislators and their representatives at the Phoenix Center in Rochester recently. The bi-annual meeting was scheduled by Joseph Cook, Director of the Mental Health Association in Beaver County, to shed light on the needs of persons with mental illness in Beaver County.

Ms. Krechowski talked about the importance of Wellness Action and Recovery Plans (WRAP) in helping persons with mental illness achieve their objectives and maintain their recovery. She also discussed the importance of funding in maintaining the many programs that provide invaluable support to persons with mental illness in Beaver County.

Aurora Walks the Walk with NAMI

by Marianne LaSalle

Spearheaded this year by team captain, Marie Krechowski, Aurora raised over \$500 and sponsored six walkers to advocate for the eradication of the stigma attached with mental illness. Over 34 people purchased the walking shoes that adorned the walls at Aurora. Team shirts were designed and purchased, and other smaller fund raisers contributed to the mounting enthusiasm for the walk.

The walk, sponsored by NAMI Southwest, was held in Pittsburgh on the South Shore walkway. Six people from Aurora traversed the three mile walkway. Our walkers this year, were Sandy Petrella, Marianne LaSalle, Ben Seveses, Tonya Rictoras and Pat Tengeres. Aurora joined with other Beaver County residents who were walking with the Phoenix Center in Rochester.

The Pirate Parrot was there with enthusiasm as was Michelle Wright, the spokesperson for the local media event. There were tents of refreshments, balloon artists, caricature artists, and a band. Along with the serious message of the walk were the fun, friendship, and camaraderie. And, on the way leaving Pittsburgh we were able to see in the distance the Rubber Duck who visited Pittsburgh this past month. It celebrated the rebirth of the city, as we were celebrating our renewed efforts for advocating for those with mental illness.



Aurora's NAMI Walkers. L to R: Pat Tengeres, Tonya Rictoras, Marianne LaSalle, Dan and Marie Krechowski, Ben Seveses and Sandy Petrella

Transition Gets Exciting New Look

by Marianne LaSalle and Maureen Hawk

BCRC's School to Work Program has an exciting new look with expanded and enhanced program space. The large conference room at the Administration Center at 1517 Sixth Avenue, New Brighton has been converted into a class/work room to allow for 8 to 9 people to work comfortably and to accommodate those who use wheelchairs. Another classroom accommodates 3 to 4. The staff for those receiving 1:6 or 1:1 services is now located within proximity of the classrooms. This allows for a flow of work, students and ideas that is conducive to a more effective and comfortable learning atmosphere.

During the years since BCRC began its transition program in 1995, the practice of assisting our youth to assume the role of employee, has expanded and improved each year. The past several years have seen an increase of referrals

from the districts requiring more community involvement, more individualized programming, and employment.

There are three levels of programs offered students ages 14 to 21 in BCRC's School to Work Program:

School to Work Pre-Vocational Program: Students learn work habits and skills while performing both paid and simulated jobs. Students participate in community tours and assessments.

Community Integration Program: Students in this program are not in the work center but in a separate group with a ratio of up to 1:6. Their day consists of community explorations, assessments, tours and visits to help them connect with adult services in the community. It also includes paid work assignments both on site and at community sites.

Individualized Programming: Students in this program may have difficulty adjusting to the typical school environment. Staff works 1:1 with the students to help them evaluate themselves and chart a course for their future. Programming at this level may also consist of community work based assessments as well as social skills training in a community setting.



L to R: Randy Palombo, Hunter Giles and Shayne Remler work on lessons in the new classroom.

WIN Newsletter Debuts

by Frank Shialabba

WIN Services has done it again. Sheila Silbaugh and her staff have found another way to highlight the talent and accomplishments of the people they serve. The new quarterly WIN Newsletter debuted in the summer of 2013 with articles authored primarily by their participants. The newsletter shares "opportunities for growth, learning and enhanced feeling of self-esteem and independence." Adrienne Agostinelli listed accomplishments like helping the Yellow Ribbon Girls and learning about germs at the Science Center. Christina Bruce learned about Vincent Van Gogh and his painting "Sunflower", while Jimmy Segal volunteered at the Air Heritage Museum. Seventeen individuals, in all, were featured in the summer edition. WIN is all about learning and growing. WIN participants travelled over 3000 miles during the summer and provided over 300 hours of volunteerism. Look for many more newsletters that will highlight future accomplishments of the WIN participants.



Don't Ever Give Up on Us

by Frank Shialabba

"Don't ever give up on us...Listen and respect us...You can make a big difference in people's lives." These are some of the thoughts of people with mental illness that were discussed by Aurora Services' Marty Shafer in a recent talk at Penn State Beaver.

The talk was designed to improve awareness of mental illness and was particularly powerful as it contained the thoughts of many of the Aurora participants. Other concerns of the Aurora participants included: "Talk to me as a person, not an illness...Keep an open mind...Help to break the stigma that is out there; we are not violent people...Realize that there are many people with mental illness who are extremely intelligent...Don't judge, get to know us."

Let's hope that Marty's talk helped many more people gain a better understanding of persons with mental illness.

School to Work

Employee of
the Month



James Rose
September



Thomas Negley
October

Shop Talk

Employee of the Month

Paulette Miller
Executive Director

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Brandi Senior
July



William Filler
August



Brandon Belich
September



Chad Lewandowski
October

BCRC Veterans Honored

BCRC staff Robert Nicol and Rick Schwartz represented all veterans in a Veteran's Day ceremony held recently at BCRC's CenterPlace. Staff and clients from WIN Services sang, presented gifts to the two veterans, and gave their reflections on Veteran's Day.

Clients wore red, white and blue adornments as they shook the hands of the two veterans and thanked them for "lighting the fires of freedom" through their service. The clients also talked about family remembrances as they expressed their thankfulness for the service of all veterans.

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