



## Safety Corner

- Submitted by the Central Health and Safety Committee

As the holiday season is approaching (OMG! The countdown has begun!) The Safety Committee would like to remind all of you of some very simple holiday safety tips to be used not only at work but at home!

- \*\* **Emergency kit** for the car (blanket, flashlight).
- \*\* **Emergency food supplies** for the home in case of bad weather that keeps you homebound a few days (powdered/evaporated milk, bottle water).
- \*\* As you take out those **holiday decorations** be sure to check each one's wiring thoroughly. Any holiday light that has cracks in the covering or the wires are exposed at the plug – throw them out!
- \*\* Ensure your **holiday lights** are UL!
- \*\* Ensure you use the right lights for the right purpose – **don't use indoor lights outside.**
- \*\* If you use a **real tree**, be sure to water it DAILY.
- \*\* Check the **smoke detector** if you have not done so already – in fact – replace the battery if you can't remember!
- \*\* If you have a **wood stove or fireplace**, be sure to have it cleaned BEFORE you use it.
- \*\* Have your **furnace** serviced.
- \*\* **Cooking a turkey?** MMMM! Sounds good! Don't forget the safe food handling practice and to ensure you cook that bird thoroughly! (pop up timers are a wonderful thing!)
- \*\* We all like to celebrate each other, the holiday and the New Year! Please be safe and have a **designated driver!** If you are hosting – do a key basket and ensure your friends and family are safe to drive home.
- \*\* **Candles?** Smell nice and look good! Be safe! Don't leave them burning unattended or around children.
- \*\* Be sure to drive safely and keep your distance, wet roads with wet leaves are slippery and as the weather cools down, sometimes it's **black ice.**

**Most of all – from all of us to all of you have a wonderful and safe holiday season!**



## In Memory of Stephen Leary

Stephen Leary, a resident of Whippoorwill since 1987 and of this agency since 1981, passed away in October. Stephen was 49 years old and was a great lover of music, McDonald's sweet tea, Special Olympics, his job and especially all of his housemates and staff at Whippoorwill.

Friends gathered at Whippoorwill a few weeks ago to remember Stephen at a memorial service held in his honor. He will be greatly missed.

## BRAVO!

Some noteworthy happenings at Ability Beyond Disability

The teams at both **Beecher** and **Thunderbird** received cite-free inspections in September. Congrats to all who were a part of this outstanding accomplishment!

The **Service Coordination** department in NY recently completed a deficiency free survey with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. The Surveyor commented on how much the Service Coordinators put into their cases and that the positive interactions with the consumers were evident throughout the records. Way to go!

**NY Supported Employment** recently completed a deficiency free survey. The Surveyor commented that their notes were thorough and reflected all the work that is put in to help their consumers obtain and keep jobs. Congrats to all!

**Link Hurgin**, a member of our Accounting team, was recently honored as Fireman of the Year in Bethel, CT. His dedication to the community is incredibly admirable and we are very lucky to have him on staff. Congrats Link and thanks for all you do!

## Inside This Issue

2

Our Vision for the Future  
Look Who's Joined Our Team  
"Oh My" Award

3

Open Enrollment  
Anniversaries  
Health & Wellness

4

Safety corner  
In Memory of Stephen  
BRAVO!

## Upcoming Events!

11/12/2010

Harvest Festival  
Leir Pavilion  
11:00 AM - 6:00 PM

4/30/2010

Reach for the Stars Gala  
Amber Room Colonnade,  
Danbury, CT

Please visit  
[www.abilitybeyonddisability.org](http://www.abilitybeyonddisability.org)  
for more information



## The Party of a Lifetime

Anyone who meets Chad remembers him because of his charming character and the unique way he is able to engage people. He has been part of the supported independent living (SIL) program since 1989 and represents the true essence of being successful in an independent setting. He has a warm personality and as a result he has created several meaningful relationships throughout his life. The natural supports that Chad maintains through his friendships and family relationships significantly enhance his life and contribute to his many accomplishments.

When Chad was reaching a milestone birthday, many of the people in his life expressed an interest in being part of a big celebration for his 50th. The staff who work most closely with Chad (Jessica Forgione and Margaret Heyward) decided to embark on planning what could be considered the "party of a lifetime," to honor him. All plans were kept under wraps so Chad would really be surprised.

The party was held at Capellaro's Grove, which was a great venue to accommodate this special event. If you don't know Chad, you should know that FUN is practically his middle name. It couldn't have been such a great party without a DJ (who was an Elvis impersonator), lots of dancing and a special singing performance from friend, Bob W. It was a pleasure to see everyone dressed up and enjoying themselves in honor of Chad.

Several consumers attended the event representing the many residential programs at Ability Beyond Disability. This is a testament to the scope of Chad's friendships. There was a reunion of sorts between individuals who used to be part of the SIL program and have moved in to other residential settings. Also in attendance were former staff members who stay in contact with Chad as well as many other close friends.

Chad's brother Steven was honored to be a part of the event. Since their family is small, Steven's relationship with his brother is especially meaningful. When Chad entered the party and was met with an enthusiastic surprise greeting, it was heartwarming to see Chad and his brother embrace in honor of this special occasion.

In addition to Margaret and Jessica, special thanks to Andy Green (a long time member of the SIL staff team) for assisting with many tasks in preparation for the big event. The success of the party was a wonderful representation of a team effort with contributions of several SIL staff members. All of you should be commended for your thoughtfulness, effort and attention to detail. Everyone who was in attendance (especially Chad!) are so grateful to have been a part of this unforgettable party!

## Look Who's Joined Our Team

We would like to welcome new additions to our team for August:

Priscila R. Barros, LSI

Judith Capote, Service Coordinator

Sa-Queen N., Carter LSI

Rhonda Deletis, Grants Manager

Dennis Espino, LSI

Alicia Esposito, Employment Specialist I

Anita C. Figgs, LSI

Majesta L. Hallock, LSI

Shayna T. Hopkins, LSI

Melissa A. Marques, LSI

Dawn Mullen, Primary Care Nurse

Cody C. Norlander, LSI

Maria C. Peralta,, LSI

Porsha L. Shelton, LSI

Katrina M. Stock, LSI

## Our Vision For The Future...

Ensuring a successful future for our consumers, families and employees

As we work towards achieving our vision for the future, it is imperative that we begin to serve different populations in new and creative ways. That is why we are so excited to announce that we have officially opened our newest Young Adult program titled, **Discover, Learn, Work!**

The program will incorporate many new concepts for a group of seven young adults to begin building a necessary foundation for their future career paths. This new model of skill building includes a daily diverse schedule of classroom instruction, internships in the community and eventually the development of consumers' own businesses. The diversity of this program will offer the Young Adults the opportunity to gain the necessary skills to obtain and sustain a community based job or foster their creativity to develop their own business.

Michelle Ouimette, Brienne Hill and Paul Starybrat have worked very hard at developing training curriculums, building relationships with local businesses for internship opportunities and creating this new model.

There will be a formal grand opening at the new Plainville, CT office in the coming months.

## "Oh My" Employee of the Month -Lora Bellamy

Lora has been working at Ability Beyond Disability for almost 2 years. She is currently the Centralized Scheduling Assistant Supervisor and worked previously as a Flex staff.

Lora was referred to Ability Beyond Disability by a friend and felt it was a "good fit" for her. She had worked with children with learning disabilities while in high school and enjoyed the experience. Lora feels rewarded for her hard work and enjoys her position. She is starting at Post University in February for a degree in Business and would like to advance her career at Ability Beyond Disability.

In her spare time Lora plays tennis and likes to travel. She also enjoys attending sporting events such as football and baseball games.

Lora was recognized by her supervisor, Patrick Gantert, for "excellence and hard work in maintaining the department in [his] absence." "It's nice to go on vacation and know that everything will be fine and run smoothly," Patrick said. He went on to say, "It's a great feeling to come back from vacation and have managers come up to you and say, "it's great to have you back BUT we barely even noticed you were gone with how well Lora and Erin handled everything."

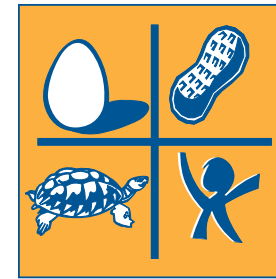
Congratulations Lora and Thank You for your hard work and dedication!



## November "Oh My" Award Nominee

Erin McFee - Centralized Scheduling Admin. Assistant

With diverse backgrounds (including many in the human services field), all of our new hires will be great additions to our organization!



## It's Open Enrollment time!

Between November 1st and December 3rd, members of the HR Team together with representatives from Mercer Benefits Consulting group and CIGNA will be attending staff meetings throughout the organization at your work location. Additional Open Enrollment meetings are

scheduled at Leir, Kisco Avenue and the new Farmington Avenue training center in Plainville.

There are some changes to hear about and discuss...

There are new options to think about...

There is an exciting new opportunity to earn \$100 in a medical flexible spending account (FSA). The \$100 FSA incentive kicks off a new year of wellness and is a great way to defer out-of-pocket expenses. But... it's only available during open enrollment!

We hope to see you at one of the many meetings during Open Enrollment!

## Health & Wellness

The goal of our Health & Wellness programs is to provide the education and tools for our employees to live and maintain a healthy lifestyle. In turn, if our employees are healthy, it provides a more productive and cost effective work force, healthier families, and maintains the highest care for our consumers.

Ability Beyond Disability has made a commitment to making Health & Wellness a priority. We have offered many incentives such as Smoking Cessation Classes, Healthy Eating Seminars, Sun Awareness tools and Walking Competitions.

As we all know, the cost of healthcare is on the rise. By helping each of our employees to become healthier individuals, it will contain the cost of our healthcare, individually and as an organization.

Ability Beyond Disability wants to help you become an "educated consumer". Over the next year and beyond, we will be providing you with the tools to research the cost of medical procedures, compare the prices between several facilities, and understand how it impacts you and Ability Beyond Disability.

Ability Beyond Disability and Urgent Care of Brookfield have formed a new relationship designed to provide cost effective access of care to all of our employees. Urgent Care of Brookfield and Ability Beyond Disability are working together to provide a convenient and affordable access to care for our employees – as the prominence of urgent care centers is lacking in the areas where Ability Beyond Disability is located. There are offices in Brookfield, Southbury and they are hoping to expand into the Mt. Kisco area.

For a list of urgent care centers in your area that are covered by our insurance plan, please visit [www.cigna.com](http://www.cigna.com).

## Anniversaries

James Wilson	23	Cuthbert Abraham	4
Marie Neale	23	Shantrice Byrd	4
Mary Ann Montesi	21	Edgar Almanzar	4
Diane Strom	20	Susana Monteiro	4
Garry Rogers	20	Janice Madera	4
Meredith Schiller	19	Anna Reinhardt	3
David Slater	18	April DeRosa	3
Charles Coburn	18	Martin Rodriguez	3
Jinky Bingham	17	Angela Raymond	3
Edward McCall	16	Tanisha Sandoval	3
Ruben Guevarez Jr	13	Jeremy Rivera	3
Florence Iyen	13	Michele Smith	3
Latisha Council	13	Angela A Boyd	2
Thomas Wilkes	12	Jennifer Staton	2
Kelly Harrison	11	Brandon Dilday	2
Robert Pappolla	11	Sheena Addison	2
Jason Layok	11	Kamara Stephens	2
Maxine Coachman	10	Tumika Langhorn	2
Maryann Estefani	10	Kelly Dandorph	1
Renata Cordeiro	10	Jennifer Arrington	1
Pamela Arturi	10	Katinah Allen	1
Virginia Peterson	9	Shamare Fraser	1
Doron Schy	9	Eric Castillo	1
Sarah Pullen	8	Eileen Hall	1
Jessica Forgione	7	James Dietter	1
Julia Mendez	7	Christopher Stephenson	1
Liz Sunners	7	Ashley Sieling	1
Nicole Reynolds	7	Kate Prukalski	1
Judy Malin	6	Sally Kilcran	1
Cherryl Shaw	6	William Jenkins	1
Tanya Medve	6	Madeline Gonzalez	1
John Dankwa	6	Ricardo Joseph	1
Louie Cordeiro	5	Chrisner Menard	1
Ana Duffy	5	Lori Cadmus	1
Yahaira Rodriguez	5	Steve Alves	1
Tara Shapiro	5	Kathleen Grosse	1
Julia Bara	5	John Watson	1
Patricia Foisy	5	Joni Anderson	1
Katherine Cebik	5	Kenneth Winters	1
Laura Bernardi	5	Kenneth King	1
Deborah Parks	5	Kristine Velez	1
Kanika Thomas	4		