



connections

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Inside This Issue

2

Our Vision for the Future
Cozy Clean Committee
Look Who's Joined Our Team

3

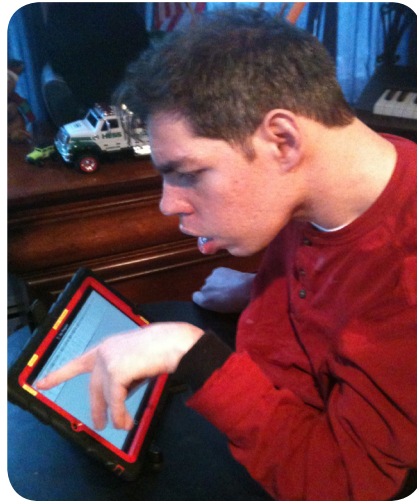
"Oh My" Award
Bravo
January Anniversaries

4

February Anniversaries
Young Adults Form Recycling
Program
In Loving Memory of John
Stewart

Technology Aids in Independence

Can you imagine how different each day might be without the ability to speak? Research says that on average a person speaks 2,000 to 6,000 words per day. We know that this isn't the reality for everyone. Many of the people we serve cannot communicate in traditional methods. While these consumers often communicate through writing, sign language or gestures, expressing oneself in the community or with new people can be difficult. Traditionally, communication devices have been implemented to be used as a communication aid but now there is a new but familiar device that is helping a wide range of individuals with disabilities achieve independence: the iPad.



Eddie, a consumer who calls Pound Sweet his home, had used the same communication device for over 10 years. The device had a functionality issue because of its age. When discussed whether to fix it or get a more updated device, it was established by the CT Therapy Team that an iPad would be a great communicator for Eddie.

Jennifer Cleary, RC of Pound Sweet says that staff at the home know Eddie so well that they are able to communicate through non-verbal communication and sounds. However, this is challenging when in the community.

Eddie was assessed by a speech pathologist and occupational therapist to determine how the device would be programmed. Cleary describes the iPad as being much more user friendly than Eddie's previous communicator, with more flexibility.

Staff will be trained in effectively using the iPad by the therapy team. "Eddie will have a much easier time communicating with this device," says Anne-Marie Satkowsky, Eddie's mother.

Eddie's iPad was purchased by contributions from his mother and Money Club funds. Ms. Satkowsky says, "I am very grateful that this has been made possible. I appreciate all the effort, it is very important to him."



Across the organization, new technology is being implemented to promote independence for the people we serve. iPads have proven to be a great tool that can be customized for each individual. Along with the communication software, there are a variety of apps designed for individuals with disabilities to learn life skills and become more independent.

iPads have already been incorporated into the day program's activities for exercises in social and life skills and the young adults in the Yonkers location are learning to access transportation and budget money through educational iPad apps!

Technology changes the lives of each of us and is having a positive effect on the people we serve.

Upcoming Events!

4/28/2012

2012 Up, Up and Away Gala...
Reaching Beyond The
Horizon

Amber Room Colonnade
Danbury, CT

8/13/2012

Ability Beyond Disability
Mercedes-Benz Dealer
Championship Golf
Tournament

Ridgewood County Club
Danbury, CT

Please visit www.abilitybeyonddisability.org
for more information

Look Who's Joined Our Team

We would like to welcome new additions to our team for Dec/Jan

Marta R. Alvarado, LSI

Nicole B. Buie, LSI

AlexaRae Buttinelli, LSI

Pia S. Cole, LSI

Kristie M. Dececchi, ES

Melanie M. Derald, LSI

Krishaveni Drummond, Diet. Tech

Christine L. Faranda, RC

Jeff F. Fregiste, LSI

Seaneva S. Gowlis, LSI

Christian J. Gagnier, LSI

Donna M. Gillaugh, Dir. of Nur.&Ther.

Jodie-Ann Henry, LSI

Janice M. Hunter, LSI

Nebat Ibrahimov, LSI

Tillisha Jackson, LSI

Leroy B. James Jr, LSI

Christina P. Klesitz, LSI

Alexis M. Lamonaco, LSI

Polixeni J. Lazarides, LSI

Bryan A. LeBlanc, ES

Brigitte N. LeFrance, LSI

Sarah Locke, LSI

Sydney A. Molina, LSI

Belinda L. Thomas, LSI

Tyrell J. Williams, LSI

Mayra Zagazeta, Driver

Mary S. Ramsey, LSI

Susan K. Refino, ES

AnnaMaria V. Rodriguez, LSI

Judy M. Sembler, Voc. Support

Ryan C. Smith, ES

Haley Wagner, LSI

Shamena Williams, LSI

Spencer Williams, LSI

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

Our Vision For The Future...

Ensuring a successful future for our consumers, families and employees

We are excited to announce that a new CRS (Continuous Residential Supports) program will be opening this April in Bristol, CT. The CRS model is a DDS funded residential program with 24-hour staffing supports developed for the specific needs of young adults who are transitioning into adulthood.

The overarching philosophy of the program is to provide an opportunity for individuals to build their lives in the community and acquire independent living skills such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, money management, recreation, safety, accessing public transportation, and community access to outside resources. The CRS model also provides flexibility for individuals to combine and share their resources to create a staffing pattern that is unique to their specific needs.

This is a great opportunity for young adults to achieve independence and an active, fulfilling life in the community in a supportive and caring environment!

The new CRS in Bristol will serve four young adults. We are excited to continue to expand the scope of our young adult services in this area; marking yet another step towards achieving our vision for the future.

The Cozy Clean Committee Spruces Cheryl Lane

On January 20th members of the Cozy Clean Committee and Operations joined forces for a Day of Caring at Cheryl Lane group home. They repainted the kitchen, sitting room, dining room, living room and hallway. The rooms came out beautifully and it was a fun filled day of team bonding!

The Cozy Clean Committee is a group of employees who volunteer their time and talents to help maintain Ability Beyond Disability group homes. Projects can include painting, gardening and cleaning.

Are you interested in helping to keep Ability Beyond Disability homes beautiful and comfortable? Volunteer with the Cozy Clean Committee! Please contact Michelle Alterisio at Ext. 3051.



Martin Rodriguez-Operations



Kevin Chiarella & Joe Cordeiro

"Oh My" Employee of the Month

-Kendra Majette



Kendra is a DSP who has been working for Ability Beyond Disability since June 2007 in Day Services. She works at Parklawn with the subcontract group Monday-Thursday and on Friday, supports two individuals at their jobs at the Big Y in New Milford.

Kendra heard about Ability Beyond Disability from friends who worked here but was really unsure if it would be the type of job she would do well at. She knew she wanted to help others and as she continued to hear great things about the company, she applied, was hired and as she has said: "here I am 4 1/2 years later".

Kendra was nominated for the "Oh My" award because of her level of care and concern for consumers throughout the snow storm in October. Sharon Stallings says, "Kendra was very assertive and took

total responsibility for ensuring that the consumers returned home safely through an unfortunate snow storm that caused the company vehicle to be left about 1/4 mile from the group home. Kendra also stayed to assist through the power outage for the evening until the next day."

Kendra enjoys working with a great group of consumers, co-workers and her supervisor, Diane Strom. She likes that there is consistency; everyone knows each other and works as a team. Kendra says she has a fun sense of humor and her weakness is food. Her all time favorite food is pepperoni and sausage pizza! Kendra loves to work and will often pick up shifts at some of the residences and SIL. Congratulations Kendra on this award and for all you do all year long!

January/February

"Oh My" Award Nominees

Danielle Hundt-Communications & Community Outreach Manager
 Diana Stavola-LPN, Dodgintown
 Ana Duffy- DSP, Millington
 Natasha Brown-LSI, West St
 Kendra Majette-DSP, Day & Work Services
 Desiree Murphy-LSI, Centralized Scheduling
 Mary Murdock-LSI, Sweet Cake
 Jennifer Staton-RA, Sweet Cake

January Anniversaries

Stacey Didato, 28	Pamela Sweeney, 4
Betty Anne Granberg, 26	Christina Figueroa, 3
Mary Pell Bidwell, 26	Patrick Gantert, 3
Deborah Reinehr, 25	Natasha Brown, 3
Marylou Grillo, 20	Kimberly Clements-Hudson, 3
Wadih Bourjeili, 19	Jenny Belhumeur, 3
Susan Hancock, 17	Ashley Baron, 3
William Jordan, 13	Kara Fiorente, 3
Georgia Watson, 11	John Ezekiel, 3
Marcia Samuels, 11	Crystal Davis, 3
Kerri Rogers, 10	Evelyn Karnes, 3
Dorothy Ayoo, 10	Jessica Ross, 3
Lorena M. McKee, 9	Emmanuel Louis, 3
Ethel Andino, 9	Heather Downes, 3
Sarah MacElhinney, 9	Adam Gropper, 3
Suzette McKenzie, 8	Hellen Muga, 3
Lucinda Hotchkiss, 8	John DeMarte, 2
Kimberly Bragoli, 8	Marionna Comstock, 2
Tom Kitai, 8	Denisse Goris, 2
Miguel Perez, 7	Janine Crawford, 2
Robindra Singh, 7	Keith Cochrane Jr, 2
Rebecca Cosgrove, 7	Desiree Murphy, 2
Carrie Cabral, 7	Gloria Santiago, 2
Cynthia Forst, 7	Greg Schelchere, 2
Marquita Bent, 6	Sarah Stokes, 1
Stephanie Paulo, 6	Louis Heller, 1
Michelle Ouimette, 6	David Capiello, 1
Jack Montalvo, 6	Annette Groski, 1
Karlette Williams, 6	Jamie Hubbard, 1
Amanda Wirag, 5	Rebecca Clark, 1
Jared Carter, 5	William Ramirez, 1
Fantasia Eason, 5	Tracy-Ann Hylton, 1
Daniel Sheehan, 5	Cheryl Ritter, 1
Peter Pannizzo, 4	Dorian Cundari, 1
Elizabeth McCullers, 4	Janet Williams, 1
Maria Frias, 4	Eric Serna, 1
Shauntae Black, 4	Jenny Huynh, 1
Jennifer Knapp, 4	Lisa Linsley, 1
Amy Marks, 4	Heather Rivers, 1
Jonathan Vicente, 4	Monica Tavares, 1
LiMattie Foster, 4	Christopher Thompson, 1
Colleen Correa, 4	

BRAVO!

Some noteworthy happenings at Ability Beyond Disability

Dorset received a **Citation Free ICF-DPH** survey for the 2nd Year in a Row! Congratulations to Tanesha Mourning, RC, Pam Arturi, SM and the IDT and Staff Teams

Long Meadow received a Citation Free **ICF-DPH** survey. Congratulations to Edwin Cruz, RC and Pam Arturi, SM and the Long Meadow Staff and IDT teams for an amazing survey.

Ability Beyond Disability received a **Gold Recognition in the Business Council of Fairfield County Healthy Workplace Employer Recognition program**, thanks to our **HR team** for offering great programs aimed at keeping us as healthy as we can be!

Let's Go Green!

The CT Young Adult Day Program has started a Recycling Program!

To accommodate the large number of cans and bottles generated at Leir, a large container has been placed in the kitchen by I15 and one has been put in the kitchen area on the second floor. At Parklawn there is a container in the kitchen.



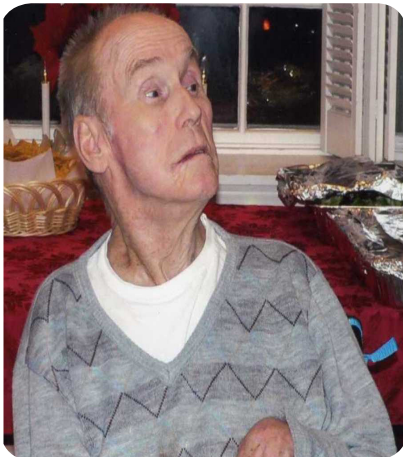
Through this recycling program, we are making Ability Beyond Disability a more green organization while the Young Adults have the opportunity to learn about the environment and gain job readiness skills!



Eric and Willem



In Loving Memory of John Stewart



John Stewart passed away on January 17th after a long battle with his illness. He passed peacefully in his sleep.

John was a part of the Ability Beyond Disability family for over 20 years.

For a number of years he lived in a supported apartment and worked as part of a cleaning crew.

For the past few years John has lived at Deer Hill.

John had made a number of friends throughout the organization and a memorial ceremony was held for him on Tuesday, February 7th.

February Anniversaries

Marion Sheppard, 26	Tameka Gibbs, 4
Nora Tigner, 24	James Cole, 4
Joan Volpe, 20	Hector Suero, 4
Kelly Stein, 18	Vanessa Brinson, 4
Peter Vigliano, 16	Joshua Valentino, 4
Judith Bogner, 16	Margo Eldridge, 4
Florence Harding, 15	Melissa Dean, 4
Donald Weiss, 15	Lisa Fusco, 4
John Ciesielski, 15	Joseph O'Connell, 4
Kevin Cooper, 15	Michael Reese Jr, 4
Paulo Almeida, 14	Kathleen Dannenhoffer, 3
Amy Brown, 13	Francisco Moffett, 3
Leoncio Guerrero Jr, 12	Matthew Solomon, 3
Angela Harris, 12	Jonathan Perez, 3
Zenith Alston, 12	Jeanine Hengel, 3
Virginia Bajraktarevic, 12	Tedasha Lyons-Santiful, 3
RaGean Wilson-McCorkle, 11	Tumika Langhorn, 2
Kristine Palmer, 11	Karen Rossman, 2
Minnie Bland, 11	Jonathan Crespo, 2
John Schiller, 11	Beth Molinaro, 2
Marilea West, 11	Marlyn Tavares, 2
Vincent DeSouza, 10	Julie Bartone, 2
Jaime Howe, 10	John Daly, 2
Carol Murtha-Collins, 10	Danielle Gillette, 2
Francine Cirillo, 10	Woodlyne Belizaire, 2
Jacqueline Osborne, 9	Darrick Terrillion, 2
Mary Murdock, 9	Emon Clinton, 2
Bonnie Garry, 7	Michael Moore, 1
Renato Fernandez, 6	William Murtough, 1
Tamar Guthrie, 6	Alyssa Griffing, 1
Nelly Sanchez, 6	Samantha Russell, 1
Eric Arroyo, 6	Jordan Bass, 1
Michele O'Neill, 6	Harold Whitehead Jr., 1
Byron Reed, 6	Jory McNab, 1
Olysha Staten, 6	Shakia Flemming, 1
Desiree Ruiz, 5	Barry Dain, 1
Manuel Santana, 5	Sean Qualey, 1
Simone Brown, 5	
Armir Buzi, 5	