



The Competitive Edge

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

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Employment Advisory Board Expands Mission *by Frank Shialabba*

A new expanded Beaver County Employment Advisory Board will begin meeting in the fall of 2016. This new Board extends the focus of the existing Employment Advisory Council to include all persons with disabilities served by BCRC who are in need of employment services.

From 2009 to 2016, BCRC's Mental Health Transformation Program provided employment support to more than 280 individuals with mental illness. This initiative was spearheaded by the

Employment Advisory Board Council, composed of representatives from the employment and social service community, as well as mental health consumers and advocates.

The previous Employment Council, inaugurated in 2008, was the result of a state initiative to move services for mental



health consumers toward a "Recovery-Oriented System." The initiative has resulted in 64 individuals obtaining competitive employment, 11 persons becoming actively involved in community based transition employment, 20 pursuing educational options, and 33 individuals obtaining meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Since mental health employment services were originally offered in 2009 by BCRC, the MHT program has received three formal reviews which determined that the program achieved a high degree of fidelity to the SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) framework for supported employment. ■

He Loves to Work and it Shows *by Frank Shialabba*

"John is such a good worker because he loves to work and has been very focused on getting a community job." This is how BCRC Program Specialist Kelly Newhouse describes John Branthoover, an individual whose drive and desire has propelled him to achieve his dream of working in the community.

John moved through many of BCRC's programs with the single-minded desire to do his best. After working at the Work Activity Center, John joined BCRC's janitorial crew, cleaning at community sites. He next joined the laundry crew at a local medical facility and once again excelled. Ms. Newhouse states, "John liked being in the community, and we encouraged him to spread his wings. For a while he worked at both sites and loved every minute. He was always ready to fill in when needed and was extremely dependable. John never turned down a chance to work." Director of Client Services Kathryn Davis describes John as, "very pleasant and easy going. He embraces responsibility and his confidence has soared."

This boost in confidence is evident as John has achieved his dream of community employment and is also living in a community program. He now works at the PennDOT driver licensing center and has recently received a raise. John is very independent, getting his equipment and supplies and starting right to work. He is a positive force who helps and encourages his coworkers. He is just "paying it forward" and expressing his gratitude for the encouragement that he has received. ■

Monaca Has Tradition of Caring *by Frank Shialabba*

July 2016 marks 40 years since the Monaca Recreation Board first sponsored a summer picnic for the clients and staff of BCRC. The late John A. Antoline approached me, his brand new neighbor, about doing something for the clients of BCRC. He simply heard what I did for a living and wanted to help. That was John's way and, as I was soon to find out, it's the way they do things in the town of Monaca. Helping others is part of the fabric of the community.

The picnics were held every other year, and this tradition was carried on by the late Bay Petures when he became director of Monaca Recreation. When Bay was succeeded by Theo Polce, she decided that every other year wasn't often enough. She wanted to have the picnic every year. Theo describes the picnic as one of the highlights of her year and possibly the favorite event sponsored by Monaca Recreation.

The picnic has certainly been a favorite of BCRC's clients. We will be forever grateful to the kind people of the Monaca Recreation Board for providing so much fun and happiness to BCRC's clients and staff.

Special thanks go to the Polce and Antoline families who have passed on a tradition of caring that is truly remarkable. ■



While Sheriff Retires, Her Spirit Remains

by Frank Shialabba



There is only one “sheriff” at BCRC, and after 14½ years of faithful service she has turned in her badge. Gloria Beighey, BCRC secretary/receptionist extraordinaire retired in August 2016. She was given the name “the sheriff” for the way she directed phone calls and traffic in the reception area with her own brand of skill and good humor.

Gloria has made many friends and well-wishers who will miss her dearly. She truly embodied the spirit of welcoming that is so important to BCRC's mission. Her supervisor, Sue Leiper, states, “Gloria greeted every person with such a warm and genuine welcome. She kept track of so many different things, and could answer just about any question.” Gifts Delivered Coordinator Susan Hill had high praise for Gloria. She states, “I will miss the resounding joy of her laughter, the tender kindness of her heart and the awesome 'Glo' of her personality.” Pat Tengeres, another member of BCRC's secretarial staff, feels that “we made a good team because we counted on each other. She was very dependable and easy to work with.”

Visitors and coworkers, alike, found Gloria very easy

to be around as she helped them start their day with a smile. Coworkers Frank Sniezek and Kim Hildman feel that, “We looked forward to coming to work because we knew that Gloria would be there to greet us and make our morning fun.” Program Specialist Cindy Kirkpatrick believes that “Gloria loved to laugh and that spirit was infectious. She had a positive word for everyone.” Former coworker Frank Shialabba feels that, “I always looked forward to sharing a laugh with Gloria. Her positive spirit was a precious gift to everyone.” That gift was cherished by her good friend, Job Coach Sue Middleman, who “will miss mornings and lunch time spent together and Gloria's contagious laugh. She is the 'go to person' when you need an answer; she was always ready to help and spread happiness to everyone.”

Gloria also brought joy to BCRC's clients. Director of Client Services Kathy Davis praised Gloria for “her genuine affection for the clients. She loved all of the clients and truly enjoyed her time with them. She knew every client by name and she never failed to make them laugh. She loved to see the School to Work students as they returned from the community, and they always knew that she was happy to see them.”

Gloria Beighey, “the sheriff” will always hold a special place in the hearts of BCRC's clients and staff. While she will no longer be at her familiar station in the reception area, her positive spirit is something that we will keep with us forever. ■

BCRC Staff Present at Learning Institute

by Frank Shialabba

Approximately 400 people attended the 2016 Care Learning Institute from June 20 to 22 at Penn State where Maureen Hawk, BCRC's Director of Youth Services, and Susan Smith, CAPS Program Specialist, were asked to deliver a presentation. The Institute was sponsored by the PA System of Care Partnership, funded by SAMHSA (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration).

The conference strived to motivate youth across Pennsylvania to get involved in decision making regarding their “care, social and public policy and leadership.”

BCRC was asked by Kim Hall, Project Director of Helping BC SCORES Grant, to present because BCRC's School to Work program represents a model for incorporating the System of Care approach.

Some key components of System of Care are that services are youth and family driven, culturally and linguistically competent, and community based.

Josh Richard and Ben Biggs, two program participants, enhanced the presentation by sharing their own personal experiences.

Also attending were Sydney Smith, representing Beaver Falls, and Julianna Hawk, representing Freedom. The two young ladies were receiving training in preparation for the launch of a county-wide, student-led program in Beaver County to make youth more aware of mental health issues, and helping them develop a voice to make service providers and county officials aware of the needs of youth in our area. ■

Joe Made Spirits Soar

by Frank Shialabba

Joseph Johnston, a faithful employee of BCRC for 26 years, was loved by friends and coworkers alike and he, in turn, found ways to brighten their lives. Joe passed away on July 25, 2016 at the age of 47.

Joe was a member of the Production Center. He enjoyed his fellow workers at the Production Center, especially his job coach Tricia Sarver. He is

remembered by Ms. Sarver as “someone with a quick smile and a wonderful sense of humor.” She states that Joe came to work faithfully during a serious and extended illness. She recalls one occasion when his mother encountered road construction, but Joe asked his mother to find another way to get to work. “He loved to work and I think it was a great comfort to him during his illness,” she says. He loved to do box assembly and he even had a job, “Joe's job,” that was named after him. Joe's tenacity earned him the Employee of the Month for June, 2016 (pictured on last page). Director of Client Services, Kathryn Davis feels that, “coworkers marveled at Joe's continued desire to work during his illness, and he set an example for all.”

Joe's favorite places to be were at work and helping to coach his beloved Potter-Raccoon Red Devil midget football team. He also loved classic rock music, and he was adept at identifying the oldies. Music made his spirits soar and Joe's sense of fun lifted the hearts of many. Doves were set free at Joe's memorial service, symbolic of the indomitable spirit of our beloved friend, Joe Johnston. ■

2-1-1 Referral Service Available in Beaver County

by *Bonnie Boguszewski*

The 2-1-1 service is a free, national resource directory striving to connect people with agencies and supports they need. There are different ways for people to take advantage of 2-1-1; the most common way is to call 2-1-1 or the toll-free number (888)553-5778, which is accessible 24/7. Those calling have the assurance of confidentiality. Additionally, those seeking support can use the national 2-1-1 website to search for local agencies and programs in their areas.

In 2014, 2-1-1 began serving Southwestern Pennsylvania, currently serving 11 counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Mercer, Washington, and Westmoreland. Resource navigators refer people to specific services in the areas of programs

to help their family, volunteer opportunities, help for an elderly friend or relative, after school programs, job training, child care, and more. On the local 2-1-1 website, <http://pa211sw.org/>, people can electronically chat with resource navigators between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays. 2-1-1 for southwestern PA partners with United Way of Beaver County, United Way of Allegheny County, and Beaver County Collaborative Action Network. ■

Jim Smith is “Heart & Soul” of Goodwill Crew

by *Frank Shialabba*

Jim Smith is the heart and soul of BCRC's work crew at Goodwill Industries in Rochester, PA. According to WIN Director of Employment Sheila Silbaugh, “Jim has worked at Goodwill for more than a decade. Staff have come

and gone but Jim has been the one constant. He can do any of the required jobs with skill and diligence. He is really the core individual for BCRC at the Goodwill sight. He has never been acknowledged for his efforts before, and I am happy that he is receiving the recognition that he deserves.”

Ms. Silbaugh praises Smith for his steadfast attendance during every situation. She states, “Jim lives in Freedom and during all of the road construction there, Jim has shown up for work on time without fail.” He is adept at all the jobs at Goodwill from hanging, to cleaning, to pulling clothes, to running racks.

Smith lives on his own with assistance from his family. According to Silbaugh, he is a kind man, who is very diligent about performing his job and keeping appointments. He is also willing to fill in at a moment's notice, which has proved to be invaluable to the Goodwill crew. ■

Spotlight on Paula Hart

by *Kelly Newhouse*



You gotta have heart! This is one of the key characteristics BCRC searches for in finding great job coaches to work with our participants in the prevocational program. We are most fortunate to have found that and so much more in Paula Hart.

Paula has been with BCRC for four years. She has managed small teams of participants at our mobile work sites and large groups in the production center. Paula takes great care in assessing participants' work to determine their specific abilities. She then works very closely with them to enhance current skills and develop new skills. She has coached many participants and her patience and care in working with them is admirable. No matter what the challenge, she is willing to take the time to find the skills hidden within. She feels that everyone should have a chance to try something new. Paula states that the best part of her job is “working with the clients and watching them develop their work skills”. Her hopes are that we continue to teach them the necessary skills in order for them to succeed in their community.

Paula is a native New Brighton girl and in her free time she enjoys spending time with her husband, two daughters and her granddaughter.

Thanks so much for your “Hart-felt” efforts in helping BCRC participants find their great talents. ■



An assortment of vegetables are on display in the WIN Services garden including, tomatoes, green peppers, green beans, cabbage and sunflowers.



Paulette Miller
Executive Director

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SHOP TALK

by Cindy Kirkpatrick

- ➔ BCRC's Chloe Huber, is now certified to teach First Aid and CPR and taught her first class to staff in July.
- ➔ The United Way Day of Caring is scheduled for September 14, 2016. Wonderful volunteers from the community come to BCRC and help to complete a much needed project.
- ➔ The United Way Campaign kicks off in October. If you would like to make a contribution to BCRC, just write BCRC in the designated place on the form.
- ➔ WIN Services will soon move to BeaverPlace. Not only will the newly remodeled building supply much needed space, but will contain such additions as; a training kitchen, a client locker room and a large career service center for job exploration and development.



Kathy Davis, Director of Client Services, helps BCRC clients get ice cream treats, courtesy of Executive Director Paulette Miller.

Employee of the Month

Production Center



Jason Kaponin
May 2016



Joe Johnston
June 2016



Tiffany Strickler
July 2016



Daryl Evans
August 2016

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