



# The Competitive Edge

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

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## WIN Will Make History With Historical Event

by Frank Shialabba

BCRC's WIN Services is at it again. WIN is preparing a "history extravaganza" that is scheduled to premiere sometime in late April. According to WIN Director Sheila Silbaugh, "Clients are researching the history of five decades with an emphasis on Beaver County's role in the history of those years."

WIN will feature music, food, sports, historical events and fashion from the 50's,

60's, 70's, 80's and 90's.

Some surprising facts about Beaver County citizens' role in historical events also will be highlighted. Ms. Silbaugh cites a Beaver County citizen who played a role in events surrounding the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. You will have to attend the event to learn the exciting details of this individual's involvement.

Meanwhile WIN participants are

involved in researching regional and national history by visiting local museums and reading historical accounts of Beaver County's place in history.

Get ready for another entertaining and illuminating presentation by the WIN participants and staff. Stay tuned for further details on this exciting event. ■

## NEVER GIVE UP

by Kay Podbielski

Work Ready is a program which is administered through the Department of Public Welfare's Bureau of Employment



and Training Programs. The primary goal of Work Ready is to assist clients with a smooth transition to an employment and

training program in order to secure and retain employment. This process starts by identifying and stabilizing barriers that are hindering people from self-sufficiency. Once these barriers have been addressed and core participation hours have been met, the client is considered "job-seeking-ready" and may move on.

Amanda West originally enrolled in the Work Ready Program in 2009. Although she was working as a cashier, she was not scheduled enough hours to be self-sufficient, thus meeting the requirements to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. She was referred by the County Assistance Office to the Work Ready program which is subcontracted to BCRC, Inc. The focus of the

Work Ready program was to assist Amanda, a mother of four, to increase her work hours. Amanda received assistance with securing the money for her learner's permit, studying for her learner's permit exam, and helping her to find a good day-care. "At that time, I was experiencing a personal crisis; it was amazing how well the staff worked with me which enabled me to move past that situation. Also, the gift cards that I was able to earn for meeting the program requirements provided school clothes for my children, and that really helped me out," recalled Amanda. She was able to increase her hours at her job and was subsequently discharged successfully from the program.

In 2012, Amanda's hours

were decreased and she was once again referred to the program. During this time, Amanda had been diagnosed with a serious illness. She related, "The people at BCRC really help me to understand my illness better and develop a plan for recovery. They helped me to find better housing for my family and now I am trying to get a job. The future looks bright; as long as I stick with Miranda (Work Ready Program Coordinator, Miranda Booth), and attend her classes, I can overcome." ■

## Don't Take Away the Right to Choose!

*by Frank Shialabba*

There has been a movement in recent years to assure that people with disabilities have a choice in their services. However, there are people who want to eliminate the ability of individuals and their families to choose the work activity center as a viable option for their son or daughter. These people believe that work activities "hold people back" and "have no real benefit."

However, another voice is being heard. This is the voice of parents and individuals who love the idea of having a place to work where people are safe, and where they can progress at their own pace under the tutelage of a caring staff. This voice is getting louder as caring parents try to maintain their right to choose.

Until recently I believed that most parents of children who are currently leaving our special education system preferred community employment as the first choice for their son or daughter. However, recent events have caused me to reevaluate that belief. Many family members are expressing the opinion that there is much that they like about the Work Activity Center. They are deeply concerned that others are attempting to take away their ability to choose.

Individuals with disabilities attending BCRC express their love of Work Activity Center programming in their positive comments, steady attendance, and smiling faces as they share time with their coworkers.

If you want to preserve the right of people to choose, please contact your local representative and support the restoration of previous levels of funding for prevocational and transitional work programs at the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center. ■

## Aurora and Staunton Clinic Collaborate On Expanded Service

*by Frank Shialabba*

BCRC's Aurora Services has entered into an exciting collaboration with Staunton Clinic to provide peer supports to their intensive case management and blended case management services for individuals with mental illness in Beaver County.

Blended case management offers individuals the ability to fluctuate between intensive case management and (less intense) resource coordination without the need to change case managers.

This new service has enabled Aurora's Peer Support Program to expand to one and one half positions.

Referrals for intensive or blended case management through this new collaboration should be directed to Staunton Clinic c/o Amanda Wyatt at 111 Hazel Lane,

Edgeworth, PA 15143 or feel free to call her with any questions at 412-749-7614. ■

## Justina Enjoys 'Adult' Status

*by Frank Shialabba*

Going from school to the adult world of work was a big change for Justina Yothers. In school, things had always come easy, but work presented new adult challenges that were scary and unfamiliar.

According to WIN Director Sheila Silbaugh, "Justina has done a remarkable job of adjusting to her new role as an adult." Justina had help from WIN staff, particularly Program Specialist Krista Schwartz.

Initially, Justina embarked on a new job at the Beaver County Courthouse. However, just when she became comfortable in her job, she learned that her company

no longer had the cleaning contract. This meant another major adjustment for Justina in her journey as an adult worker.

In November, 2011, Justina began the second phase of her journey with a new job at the National Network of Digital Schools. According to Ms. Schwartz, "Justina does a good job of cleaning the classrooms. When she encountered some difficulty getting crayon marks off the desk, we came up with the idea of using a Magic Eraser. Justina says it works great." According to her employers, Justina, herself, "works great." Ms. Schwartz praises Justina's work ethic, and she states that her biggest challenge was establishing a work routine.

Justina has gained a great deal of confidence while meeting this and many other challenges. She has earned the right to enjoy her status as an adult worker who is making a contribution to her community. ■

## Don't Be Afraid to Report Abuse

The Beaver County Rehabilitation Center and the PA Office of Developmental Programs encourage individuals with disabilities or their families to report abuse or suspected abuse to the proper authorities. Some examples of abuse are:

- *taking another person's property*
- *mistreatment of another person*
- *hurting another person or using force on someone*
- *ignoring the health, safety and/or basic needs of an individual with disabilities*
- *attempting to control another person*

Suspected abuse may be reported to a family member or friend, a Supports Coordinator, local police, the ODP Customer Service Hotline (1-888-5675-94345) or the Disability Rights Network

(1-800-692 7444 [voice]); (1-877-375-7139 [TDD]).

Abuse is never right and it is never the fault of the person being abused. Know your rights and protect yourself. Don't be afraid to report abuse. ■

## Spotlight On: Jayne Sainer Bon Chance Jayne!

*by Jennifer Gengarella*

Bonjour! This friendly and very French greeting is spoken frequently by Jayne Sainer at WIN Services in Beaver. Jayne is BCRC's resident French speaking program specialist. She has been a part of BCRC's family for over three years, and she is an integral part of WIN's Supported Employment department.

Jayne worked previously with the School to Work program at BCRC, and she now works with many of the adults that she had supported as students. This experience

has given her the chance to see students transition into adulthood, obtain employment, and mature. Jayne believes BCRC is creating independent thinkers and problem solvers. She feels this is how BCRC will grow in the future.

A graduate of Penn State, and professing to bleed blue and white, Jayne and her husband are the proud parents of a 17 year-old daughter.

Along with having a wonderful daughter and husband, Jayne lists amongst her achievements the fact that she has seen Bruce Springsteen in concert 15 times from 1975 to 2012. That may just qualify her as BCRC's resident Bruce Springsteen and French expert! Jayne would love to attend a Springsteen concert in Paris, where she hopes to retire someday. Au revoir Jayne and bon chance! ■

## Incident Prevention Restructured

As part of BCRC's continuous effort to maintain and improve the quality of services, the agency Incident Prevention Committee has been restructured.

In addition to analyzing behavior incidents and providing recommendations to the executive director on continuous quality improvement, the agency will also conduct peer reviews of any incident that has been investigated by a certified investigator. These reviews are done to maintain the highest quality of investigations. They serve to assure that investigations are done in a timely manner and that each investigation follows the strictest process guidelines as outlined in the Pennsylvania Certified Investigators Manual.

According to former Incident Prevention Committee Chairperson Frank Shialabba, "These reviews are done as part of an overall attempt by BCRC to monitor agency protocol. Peer reviews and other internal compliance reviews are established as both monitoring and learning tools for agency staff and management."

BCRC is committed to total quality management of agency services for the betterment of the people that we serve. ■

## CenterPlace Makes Continuous Improvements

BCRC has started the second phase of planning to move additional services to the CenterPlace location at 131 Pleasant Drive, Aliquippa. According to Executive Director, Paulette Miller, "It will still be some time before any BCRC clients will work in Center, at least six months or more. However, we are getting the work area ready so it will be in move-in condition for our clients."

Ms. Miller cites the numerous grants that BCRC has received that will greatly enhance the work environment for BCRC's clients and staff in the production center. She states that, "We have received grants for air conditioning, for the conversion of an accessible restroom and improved lighting that will make for a pleasant work atmosphere for our clients."

Ms. Miller credits BCRC's strategic move committee for addressing issues like the location of work groups, the logistics of clients entering and leaving the building, the remodeling of two existing restrooms, widening office doors, and strategic placement of communication and IT devices.

BCRC's information technology staff recently established their headquarters at CenterPlace and additional office furniture will be moved in the near future.

Ms. Miller is confident that the CenterPlace production center will be a spacious and comfortable location for the clients and staff of BCRC. ■

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# Shop Talk

*by Kay Podbielski*

## Employee of the Month

**Allen Kronk**  
*October***James McCartney III**  
*November***Shawn Hurley**  
*December*

According to Susan Hill, BCRC's Gifts Delivered Featuring Candy Bouquet "had one of its best Valentine's Day sales ever. Classic roses, stuffed animals and custom arrangements were the big Valentines' items. The big eyed, stuffed toad called 'toad-ally yours' was especially popular."

**Gifts Delivered** is busily preparing for Easter and spring sales with spring bouquets, wreaths and specialty items, such as sparkly bunnies and colorful stuffed owls.

**To order or get more information call Susan Hill at 724-847-1306 or 724-847-4513.■**



*BCRC is an equal opportunity employer and provider. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). In addition, BCRC is funded in part by BCBH, OVR, DCED, USDA & United Way.*