



More than 800 Receive COVID Vaccines

By Frank Shialabba

More than 800 people received COVID vaccine at clinics held at BCRC in February and March through the efforts of BCRC's executive director and her dedicated staff.

According to Executive Assistant Susan Leiper, "Executive Director Paulette Miller was diligent in her efforts to bring the vaccine to BCRC clients and staff as soon as she found out many were in the 1A category for distribution." Ms. Miller made numerous calls seeking access to the vaccine, and she worked for several weeks to coordinate the dates and times for the vaccinations.

Ms. Miller was aided in the planning by Facilities Manager Laura Medarac and Executive Assistant Susan Leiper. Ms. Medarac prepared the building for these unprecedented events by assuring that proper safety protocols (including social distancing and adequate PPE) were in place, while Ms. Leiper assured that proper documentation was completed.

In addition, 10 BCRC staff volunteered on the days of the events to see that the process ran smoothly.

Two hundred twenty-two BCRC staff and clients received the vaccine, while another 323 individuals and staff at local congregate care settings received the vaccine at a clinic hosted by BCRC but run by the PA Dept. of Human Services, Office of Developmental Programs. Additional clinics were recently held for 330 more eligible individuals.

According to Ms. Medarac, "people were extremely grateful, appreciative and relieved" to receive the vaccine. By all accounts



the clinics ran smoothly with no lines or waiting. Ms. Leiper states, "the hope is to vaccinate as many people on site as soon as possible to create a safer workplace."■

WIN And STW Trade Spaces

By Jessica Rusak

BCRC is excited to announce that our youth services *School to Work (STW)* program and *WIN Services* team have traded spaces! Beginning January 4, 2021, these programs are operating out of their new locations.

WIN Services will now be located in the front, lower level of our main CenterPlace facility located in Aliquippa, PA. This location is conveniently set in the BCTA plaza right off Interstate 376 and only six miles from their previous Beaver location.

School to Work will provide programming from the BeaverPlace location, previously occupied by *WIN Services*. This location is one block off the main street in Beaver and will serve as an ideal space for youth services including instructional work classes, vocational assessments, community tours, volunteer opportunities, and paid work experiences.

BCRC is committed to providing quality services and believes this swap will result in increased efficiency between our programs and will positively affect the overall quality of the services we provide. Additionally, as we continue to see growth within our programming, this change will provide adequate space for the needs of each program.

We view this as the beginning of yet another great chapter in our long history and we look forward to providing services from our newly *traded spaces*!■

Trading Spaces

Entertaining and Relationship Building Virtual Experiences Provided by Aurora

By Jessie Dvorzak

While being an invaluable means of continuing consumer mental health support at Aurora Services, the virtual experience has many other benefits that add interest and convenience for the participants.

First, the virtual experience can be visually creative and interesting. Staff may use different themes as backgrounds that can stimulate and promote discussion. Background images can be a starting point for discussing coping skills and normalizing mental illness with references to pop-culture.

Second, it's easy to use. Program participants of all ages can access virtual apps on their computer.

Third, it's a great improvement on phone contact. Seeing faces and other non-verbal signals can help bolster communication. Seeing a person reacting, smiling, and enjoying their home environment with their pets and belongings can bring people closer and enhance their relationships.

Fourth, many people have difficulty with transportation and the virtual experience allows people to connect instantly.

It is always good to make the best of a challenging situation and the Aurora staff have certainly done that with their entertaining and relationship building virtual experiences.■



Zoom Provides Safe Way to Communicate

By Sarah Hazel and Ian Thomas

With closures and restrictions on gathering sizes due to COVID-19, BCRC has found safer alternatives for meetings, trainings, and events. One of the best substitutes for in-person gatherings is Zoom, an online chat service that enables multiple users to join meetings together via phone, computer, or iPad. BCRC has taken advantage of the online application of Zoom by scheduling safety meetings, department meetings, trainings, and client contact through the service. Topics covered by BCRC program specialists include interview skills, German language and culture and etiquette.

Not all Zoom meetings are strictly work related, though. Fun Zoom events have been offered to clients and staff through Milestone HCQU West. One of these events is the Next Chapter Book Club, a club held over Zoom that allows adolescents and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to read and discuss books that are provided by the club. Another activity provided is Fun & Fitness, where clients and staff can join weekly videos to participate in workouts to improve balance and joint health.

Some of the sessions have 15 to 17 participants with lively discussions. According to Program Specialist Sabine Kane, “the best part is the interaction between clients when they haven’t seen each other for a while.” One client’s mother could hear her son laughing during the meeting, and she thought she had turned on the television. She saw that he was enjoying his Zoom meeting, laughing and having a great time with his friends.

According to Program Specialist Karen Adamo, when clients returned to work after the closure for the pandemic, they asked about the Zoom meetings. Ms. Adamo states, “they asked how they were going to do their Zoom meetings if they were at work all day.”

Obviously, Zoom has been a success, while it has added another facet to BCRC’s program options and the agency’s ability to communicate. ■



In the Spotlight

Sabine Kane

by Kelly Newhouse

Over the past year, we have experienced trials and uncertainties unlike any other. We have all felt heightened fears, anxiety, and worry about many things in our everyday lives. As BCRC’s Mental Health Program Specialist Sabine Kane sees this firsthand.

In this role, Sabine provides services, supports, resources, and referrals to mental health clients through BCRC’s vocational preparation program in the production center. She also works with those clients engaged in community employment services through BCRC. Sabine meets with prospective clients for mental health programs for intake and referrals in collaboration with Trails Ministries, The Cornerstone of Beaver County, Cornerstone Recovery & Supports, and Deliverance Ministries. Sabine is also a certified Community Work Incentives Counselor. She can advise clients on how wages affect their disability payments and other benefits.

Sabine has been with BCRC a little over four years. She has an extensive background in human resources, human services, and healthcare administration. She is currently working on her post-graduate degree in Community Care & Counseling-Traumatology. Sabine’s favorite part of her job is “being able to make clients lives a little better, easier, and brighter”. She has a knack for making clients and coworkers laugh and smile. Sabine hopes that the clients “find happy, healthy, peaceful, and fulfilling lives, however they define that”. She hopes to “build connections and bridges for them so they know they are surrounded by a support network they can rely on and feel they are valued and heard.”

In her spare time, she connects with family, especially her children of whom she is most proud. She enjoys running, “fast”, reading for pleasure, snuggling with her chocolate lab, and playing with her grandchildren.

Sabine has a special interest in social justice. She would “like to see more equity in the world rather than people prejudged, cast aside or marginalized.” ■

Program Prepares Youth for Next Chapter

By Kris Beal

The Youth & Young Adult (Y&YA) Independent Living (IL) Employment Training Program, which began in 2018, is thriving at BCRC. The Y&YA- IL program allows participants to build skills in four domains: living, learning, vocational and social skills. Individuals, ages 16-21 with an open case with Child and Youth Services (CYS) of Beaver County, are eligible to participate up to five hours a day five days per week as desired. Participants age 21-23 may also enroll in the program, as directed by CYS.

Originally, the program was designed in a structured-classroom style, but has evolved to “meet participants where they are, with an emphasis on building individual rapport and trust” says Susan Smith, youth services program specialist. Staff help participants “build the pieces” necessary to move toward the next chapter of their lives, ultimately supporting and encouraging independence, marketability and employment success. “We do what it takes to help individuals be successful,” including transporting participants from their home when necessary, providing assistance in obtaining documents necessary for employment, and supporting opportunities with local school officials, volunteer coordinators, and business leaders.

Smith says “we have implemented the SAMHSA System of Care Philosophy,” which is participant guided, community based, and reflects the cultural, racial, ethnic, and linguistic differences of the individuals we serve. Smith emphasized she is “very thankful for the wonderful relationship we have fostered with CYS” which allows for the continued success of the program. ■



BCRC Friends and Staff Provide Memorable Christmas

By Frank Shialabba

Christmas and the annual Christmas party have always been the highlight of the year for BCRC's clients. But what about Christmas 2020? Due to state infection rates, BCRC's production centers followed recommendations and issued a temporary closure, which meant there would be no party. The John A. Antoline Foundation, BCRC staff and the local IBEW answered this challenge with a Christmas alternative.

The John A. Antoline Foundation has "been there" for BCRC's clients for the last 23 years. They have enabled hundreds of clients to celebrate Christmas with music, food, and fun at the annual Christmas Party. This was the wish of the late County Commissioner John A. Antoline, who found funding for the party and personally served clients at the party in the last year of his life. Executive Director Paulette Miller reached out to his daughter, County Register of Wills Tracy Antoline Patton, who assured her that support from the foundation for the party would not waiver. In addition, BCRC's staff had numerous fundraisers and the local IBEW hall provided boxed candy for the clients as usual.

The candy, a gift bag and a \$10 gift certificate to McDonald's were delivered to the clients homes by WIN clients and staff, and were accompanied by Santa (Rick Roberts), his elf (Tricia Sarver) and the Grinch (John Baumgardner).

We would like to thank the Antoline Foundation, the local IBEW and the BCRC staff for making Christmas 2020 a memorable one for our clients. ■



BCRC Purchases Minivans With Grant Money

By Mary Jo Sanders

BCRC purchased four new minivans that as the result of a grant from a charitable trust. These new Chrysler Voyager vans will be used to engage more clients in community participation and inclusion.

The new minivans will aid in providing safe transportation for clients participating in community activities. The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated strict social distancing guidelines, thus limiting the number of riders in our vans. The addition of these four new vehicles will allow more daily participation in the community, thus helping us to advance our mission, "to provide the opportunity for growth and independence while respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each individual."

BCRC is dedicated to ensuring continued quality services for the clients we serve and we have been working tirelessly to keep everyone safe and healthy as we look forward to the end of the pandemic. ■

Dustin Loves and Learns

By Frank Shialabba

Whether it's learning about his new job, traveling, or studying how watches work, Dustin Taylor of Aliquippa, is a giving and inquisitive person who is interested in the world and people.

Dustin was hired in September 2020 at the Monaca Walmart. He works as a cart attendant and according to WIN Services Adam Loverich, "Dustin is a very diligent worker who is conscientious of the needs of his customers." Dustin is always trying to learn and improve his performance, and he asks many work-related questions. His boss offers positive feedback, and he describes Dustin as someone who is "reliable and shows up for work regularly."

Dustin's coworkers are appreciative of his contribution as a team-player, who works hard and enjoys interacting with his customers.

Dustin's love of people extends to his family. He is an uncle who enjoys spending time with his nieces and nephews. He loves to see their faces light up when he buys them presents.

Dustin also enjoys traveling and studying watches. He visits both a close friend in Florida and his brother in North Carolina. He also likes to tinker with watches to see what makes them work.

Dustin loves to learn and enhance the lives of his customers and all those who know him. ■



Linda Gadomski's Family Honor Her Memory

By Frank Shialabba

Linda Gadomski, age 66 and one of BCRC's bright lights, passed away recently. Linda was a valued employee of BCRC for 40 years. Linda loved life and her coworkers, and she especially enjoyed ice cream. It is a fitting tribute to Linda that her family will honor her memory by sponsoring BCRC's annual ice cream event.

Linda's sister and brother-in-law, Michelle and David Rossi of Gibsonia, and her brother and sister-in-law, Todd and Wendie Gadomski of Brookeville, Maryland read about our annual ice cream event in the BCRC newsletter, and they felt that sponsoring the event would be the best way to honor Linda's memory.

Linda embodied the giving spirit that so characterizes BCRC's clients. She contributed greatly to the work done at our production centers and in the community at the Beaver County Courthouse. She also contributed to the happiness of her coworkers by sharing her loving spirit.

We would like to thank Linda's family for their generous gesture. We will always remember your sister Linda for her gentle nature and the many times we shared at BCRC. ■



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Executive Director

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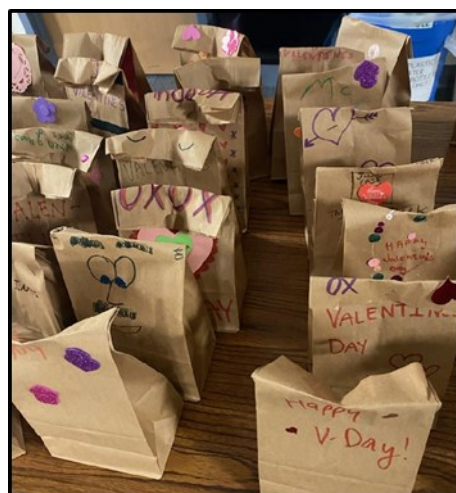
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It is the mission of the Beaver County Rehabilitation Center, Inc. to provide the opportunity for growth and independence while respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each individual.



The WIN staff and clients spent a few weeks decorating and delivering a large amount of Valentine bags to the clients at home. The clients who have returned to BCRC received theirs at work.

Thank you for making this holiday extra special this year! ❤️



Employee of the Month



Dakota Reed
March 2021

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