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And Now - A Word from your President

By Mary Brandstetter, Clark County Board of DD

This week I remember a poignant lesson I learned from an article I read many years ago when person-centered planning first came here to Ohio. I searched my desk and found the well-worn clipping from Reader's Digest. It was written by Lewis Timberlake in the publication, Timberlake Monthly. Here it is:

While on a tour of California's giant sequoias, the guide pointed out that the sequoia tree has roots just barely below the surface.

"That's impossible!" I exclaimed. "I'm a country boy, and I know that if the roots don't grow deep into the earth, strong winds will blow the trees over".

"Not sequoia trees," said the guide. They grow only in groves and their roots intertwine under the surface of the earth. So, when the strong winds come, they hold each other up".

"There's a lesson here. In a sense, people are like the giant sequoias. Family, friends, neighbors, the church body and other groups should be havens so that when the strong winds of life blow, these people can serve as reinforcements and can strive together to hold each other up".

The strong winds of life certainly blew through Clark County this past week. A freak accident on I70 took the lives of three individuals with developmental disabilities and a caregiver as they were going home from their day program. Other individuals were injured and continue to recover at home or in hospital.

It is true. Families, friends, neighbors and in fact strangers have served as reinforcements. E-mails, phone calls, letters of condolence and support have come from all around the country. Offers of prayers, counseling resources, staff support, food and donations for medical care and funeral expenses have been received. A testament that each life, each story, touches others in lasting and oft times profound ways. So many people, so many ways we strive to hold each other up. A heartfelt thank you to all.

A couple of years ago, I had the amazing opportunity of visiting the Sequoia National Forest. It was incredible to view the magnificent trees and to recall what I had heard about their root system. Viewing the forest made the story all the more meaningful to me. Great things supported by interwoven connections.

This is my last message to the membership as President of the Ohio Association of Adult Services. It has been an honor to serve the Association in this way. As I leave, know that caring and competent professionals continue to serve you on the board of OAAS.

Editor's Note: Mary Brandstetter announced her retirement from the Clark County Board of DD, effective in March 2010. Those of us who have had the pleasure of working with Mary during her many years of service, wish her the best!

Join the OAAS Yahoo Group

Go to: www.yahogroups.com

Do a Search for OAAS

Click on the OAAS Logo and sign up!



It's that easy!



ART THINKTANK: Sharing Ideas on Art & DD Programming

Meeting Quarterly with Art Consultant, Patty Mitchell

The ART THINK TANK meetings have been really great. Thanks to everyone for sharing their ideas, successes and struggles. The goal is share information- so we can build strong programming and get on with the making of ART!

There are many successful developing studios throughout Ohio. Once an organization begins to make art there seems to be this electric jolt- catapulting the group into new opportunities. Before the first pieces are even finished- visitors want to know when they will be for sale, how much, who did them, “Can we hang those in the library?”, “Are people getting paid for their work?”, “Can I help?”, “Would you make a quilt from my grandkids drawings?”...BOOM! All of a sudden there are tons of opportunities- and this can be exciting and overwhelming for the studio organizers.

One idea leads to another- a drawing becomes the design for a quilt, the quilt becomes a greeting card, people want to buy them...how do you pay the individuals who did the art on the card? If you can not answer this question the flow of this opportunity can stop. You are ready to continue and get those cards printed and ready to be boxed on your workshop floor- but your business manager has questions about payment. Everything will stop until the money questions can be answered.

This next ART THINK TANK Susan Dlouhy will be presenting on payment breakdown- providing examples and answering your questions. Bring examples of your art, products or product ideas to the next meeting so she can get a better understand your situation.

So why does making art work so well?- Opposed to doing crafts?

Art takes form in response to ideas. First you imagine, then something can be made. You can't bake a bunch of cookies until you decide to- then what kind? Do you have the ingredients...check, check...off you go. The cookies are made, shared and through your work- connections happen. You've made something for someone to taste, enjoy or trigger a memory.

Making art creates connections too. It helps us tell each other who/what is important, points out beauty or things that are confusing. Through collaborative arts programming the arts are used as a vehicle so we can listen and respond to each other. Unlike baking cookies- there is not a predetermined “product”. Only that through the process of making something new we will learn about each other, create evidence of our existence and how we see a bit of the world. **(Continued on page 3)**



“Tornado” – Passion Works Studio, Athens, OH

(Continued from Page 2)

How is this approach different from crafts?

Arts and Crafts, traditionally used in programming, are about an already predetermined goal. The pieces of a project fit together in an expected way and we (the participants) are the labor for someone else's idea. When working with people with multiple challenges- and a macaroni angel is held up as the example of what we are shooting for- and say participants do not have fine motor skills for the task- or have thought processes that can lead them through the expected steps of the task- then the person's deficits are amplified. And who wants to be reminded of the things they can't do? Offer someone a pen in anticipation of seeing their drawing- respond positively to what is made- understanding that they are the only one who could make that particular work. Through this simple exchange you have created the environment where individuals are respected for their personal insight. Now you have created a platform for discovery and experimentation.

As a staff person/facilitator it is not your responsibility to imagine the completed project. You have the ability to research methods, find materials...you bring the idea of what process to explore (i.e. painting, paper mache, quilting, sculpture, doll making, books...) the content- or ideas and approach to the materials- come from your participants. You can say- "This is the correct way to draw a house...everyone follow me." Or you can offer materials and see what happens. Maybe the participants will draw a floor plan, or a rabbit hole or a flower- doesn't matter. In the moment of drawing with someone- you can encourage, ask questions...pointing to the drawing, "What happens next?" encouraging expanding on an idea...and you might get an idea and think- that sketch would look great cut out of 8' piece of plywood. You have the ability to find the wood, a way to project the image, trace and cut

it out. You can then ask participants to paint and further work on the cut outs. Again- you are not responsible in directing the project so tightly that you offer THE colors for the project- but ask the participant artists- "What color do you see this giant bunny?" And the question can be asked directly, holding up a color chart, a few pots of paint (communicating in the best method for your participant)- It comes down to really listening and responding- respecting the ideas of your participants- and deferring all activity/concepts that can be generated by the participants- be generated by the participants.

When people first learn of this method of working and feel uncomfortable -I've heard, "I don't have the time to do one more thing", "I don't like the way this art looks", "I'm not an artist"...My response...don't let your fears block you from new experiences and in turn deny exciting opportunities for the people you serve. Never made anything like this before? GREAT! Participating in doing something unfamiliar- you will learn so much! Afraid of looking silly? Ignorant? What if you aren't any good at it? Doing nothing may be safe, but it is NO FUN! And no fun makes for a very long work day. MAKE FUN and people will be attracted to you and your project. FUN attracts attention and energy. I love working with people with cognitive challenges- as a population these folks are so enthusiastic and responsive. If you declare DISCO DAY! Blast some music you will have a party before you know it. We are so lucky to work with a group so eager to please and participate in the world.

Next Meeting: March 10, 2010

"How do we pay people for their art, design or production of art product?"

Payment Breakdowns- Design Fee, Hourly Wage, Time Studies...

With special guest – Susan Dlouhy, President of Norwich Consulting Services

To Register: www.oaas.org

OAAS and OSDA

OAAS and the Ohio Self Determination Association have enjoyed a great partnership for the last several years. For the past three years, OSDA has sent a liaison to the monthly OAAS Board meetings to share information. Starting in 2010, OAAS will be sending a representative to the monthly OSDA meetings in Delaware. In addition, OAAS will continue to support and sponsor opportunities for self-advocates to receive training and support through OSDA. For more information about OSDA, please visit their web site: www.ohiosda.org.

CompManagement, Inc.

A Sedgwick CMS Company

The Time to Act is Now!

It is not too late to be reviewed for the Ohio Association of Adult Services workers' compensation group rating discount program. Workers' compensation premiums can be costly, and group rating is the BEST way to reduce that expense. The Ohio BWC group rating filing deadline is February 26, 2010.

CompManagement, Inc. (CMI), our third party administrator for workers' compensation, is conducting reviews for our group rating program until February 12. If you participate in another group rating program, you may not be saving as much as possible and you may be paying extra dues to belong to another group. It pays to compare.

To request an analysis by phone and receive a no-cost and no-obligation savings quote, contact CompManagement's Customer Support Unit at 800-825-6755, option 3.

If you are not currently eligible for group rating, new BWC alternative rating programs administered by CompManagement are now available. Group Retrospective Rating and Deductible programs may assist you in reducing your workers' compensation premium. Call CompManagement's Customer Support Unit today to discuss your options.

We urge you to take advantage of this tremendous member benefit!



MARK KNUCKLES TRAINING MARK KNUCKLES TRAINING

We're Back and We're Better!!

On March 25 & 26 Mark Knuckles Associates, Inc. will be in OH presenting their Commensurate Wage Compliance Training conference. The 2010 conference is going to be exciting – they will have an Industrial Engineer, Keith Padgett. Keith will be leading the hands-on time study training portion of the conference. He will be available to answer your questions regarding process improvement; production line methods, work measurement, pacing, lean manufacturing and much more.

They are coming off the most aggressive year that they have experienced with the Department of Labor in 23 years. At the time of this writing they are assisting six CRPs investigated by the DOL. They will share about those US Department of Labor investigations as well as; new investigative strategies; best business practices; employer strategies for surviving the economy – see you in March!! For more information or to register: www.oaas.org.

Coshocton County Adults Plan Trip to Nashville

Submitted by Nikki Markel, Coshocton County Board of DD

Several individuals from Coshocton County will be traveling to Nashville, TN on Friday, June 4th and stay until Sunday June 6th. While in Nashville they will stay at the Grand Ol Opry Resort Hotel, take a dinner cruise on the General Jackson Riverboat, watch an Opry Show and visit the Opry Museum. They are also taking a tour of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Ryman Auditorium.

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ OSCB Winter Conference/OPI Luncheon – March 15, 2010, Embassy Suites in Dublin
- ◆ OACB Spring Conference – May 20-21, 2010, Marriott NW in Dublin



For current information go to www.oacbdds.org.



The BUCK Stops in Cuyahoga County

After a great deal of planning, obtaining licenses and training consumers, SAW, Inc. entered the for-profit market for the first time with a spring opening of a Just-A-Buck franchise at Snow and Broadview roads in Parma's Midtown Plaza.

According to Store Manager Kim Pritchard, the 5,500-square-foot retail space is well-situated in the strip center, which is fully occupied and is convenient for foot traffic.

Pritchard, with 12 years of retail experience, was hired specifically to manage the retail location.

"We have two assistant managers," she said, "Our store hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. and Sunday from 11a.m.-6 p.m. We have hired 12 consumers to handle the register, stocking and receiving of merchandise.

"The consumers who are hired to work at Just-A-Buck will work as a group similar to an enclave, or they receive job-placed and/or work adjustment services," Pritchard said. "This gives us a chance to train each consumer to do everything. Our goal is to train the consumers in a retail environment to be able to go out and get a job with another retailer."

Merchandise, all of it no more than a dollar, includes balloons, cards and party supplies.

"We're very excited about the operation," said Joe DeCapite, director of employment services, "because in this economy, we are able to create job opportunities for many of our consumers."

The other side of that coin, or dollar, is that with the economy the way it is, more and more people are shopping at dollar stores as they look for ways to save on a variety of items. The store has posted the top weekly sales in the chain several times since it opened.

Prior to the economic turndown, a consumer study showed that more than one-third of all U.S. households regularly shopped at dollar stores on a monthly basis. The study further showed that dollar stores, once patronized primarily by low-income households, hold growing appeal for moderate and upper-income households, older consumers and ethnic groups.

In spite of that, as SAW General Manager Teresa Lowery pointed out, "This is our first attempt at a for-profit operation. I am confident the projections—and the experts—are right about the value of, and need for, dollar stores in this economy. And beyond!



Just-A-Buck Ribbon Cutting Ceremony – Parma's MidTown Plaza

Humblebuy Is Live and Risk Free!

The Humblebuy team has been diligently working these past few months! We have systems in place, are live, and are now ready to concentrate our efforts at significantly building the number of items available on our site for shoppers. This risk free, unique distribution channel will only be success if we can quickly add items manufactured by, or those somehow value impacted, by individuals with disabilities. We are excited to announce that we have a new gift section on our site providing shoppers with gift options at their fingertips.

So when seeking products to fill a need, be it for home, office, or gift giving we have a check here first location for cause minded individuals allowing them to fill there needs while at the same time providing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities!

Please contact us immediately if you have products that could be a part of this exciting venture. This site not only provides exposure to cause minded individuals across the country, but it provides an opportunity for your agency to consider manufacturing items in low quantity to test the market without significant inventory demands and up front costs. Humblebuy wants to partner with you to take your products to market. We believe that our clients are skilled craftsman and deserve an opportunity to earn a living wage even in these tough economic times. Join the network and become a part of the much needed solution providing employment opportunities for those we serve!

Contact Humblebuy at: www.humblebuy.net

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LIFEWorks = Non-Traditional Employment Outcomes

Compiled by Susan Dlouhy, LifeWorks Project Coordinator

Leveraging Internships for Employment (LIFE) Works is a five-county Pathways II collaboration with the Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) that includes Franklin, Fairfield, Licking, Union and Hocking Counties and their assigned RSC Counselors. LIFEWorks started as a four-county collaboration (Franklin, Fairfield, Licking, Hocking) in October 2008 and was recently renewed for an additional year, with the addition of Union County. The purpose of this project is to increase services and foster non-traditional employment outcomes for individuals with mental retardation or other significant developmental disabilities in the five-county region. This project promotes individual choice through collaboration with participants, their families and RSC Counselors. The project also redirects students into the community who might otherwise participate in sheltered employment.

LIFEWorks focuses on transition from school to work by offering a variety of paid work internships/ work experiences to participants. Career exploration sites and work experiences are developed in partnership with local employers in each of the participating counties. Individuals design their own internship rotation schedule in conjunction with their family, RSC Counselor, and project staff. Project staff monitor, train and assess project participants as they perform their jobs.

This non-traditional project design is a cost effective model which does not include the expenditure of funds to hire additional staff that would act as RSC Counselors. Instead, the project supports the caseload management function of the Counselor by providing services to RSC and DODD eligible individuals that lead to quality, non-traditional jobs.

Eighty-seven participants accessed the LIFEWorks project during the first year, with 20 obtaining successful employment. As the project continues, many of the first-year participants are

beginning to find success in jobs of their choice. Some of the stories of individual achievement are highlighted below.

MARK'S STORY Fairfield County



Prior to entering the *LIFEWorks* program, Mark was no stranger to employment. He had held several jobs but could never find his niche where he was happy and wanted to maintain the job. Mark wanted help finding a job he would like and services to help him learn to work with his supervisors to increase his job satisfaction. Mark started the *LIFEWorks* program with an internship at the Project Grow Greenhouse at Ohio University-Lancaster Branch. He quickly found he did not like greenhouse work and was moved to The Zone, a food service program at Ohio University - Lancaster. At the Zone, Mark was responsible for stocking, cleaning and making minor repairs on the vending machines. Mark found he liked the work but decided he did not want a position where he would have to travel to different sites.

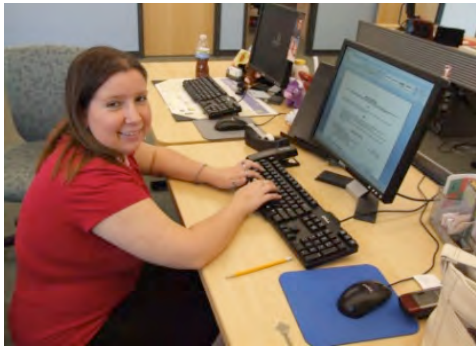
Mark then moved to Giant Eagle on Hamilton Road where he tried several different areas of work before deciding on working in the produce department. In the produce department, Mark is responsible for not only stocking all the different varieties of vegetables but also providing customer assistance. This has always been an area of challenge for Mark as he tends to suffer from some social anxiety. Through the *LIFEWorks* program he has been able to learn strategies to help him cope with his anxieties. **(Continued on Page 9)**

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Mark also has learned to advocate for himself. Recently when he had some problems working with a new supervisor, Mark was able to successfully negotiate a positive compromise.

Mark's case was successfully closed with BVR in December and he continues to receive support from Community Employment Services in the way of monthly follow-along. Mark hopes to continue to increase his work hours to 40 hours a week so he can receive benefits and work his way off of his SSDI payments.

JESSE'S STORY
Franklin County



Jessie started the *LIFEWorks* Program in November 2008. While in the program Jessie completed a total of 18 weeks of internships in four different locations. Jessie completed her internships with First Link, Time Warner Cable, Nationwide Children's Hospital, and Giant Eagle. Jessie enjoyed the opportunity of "trying out" jobs with different businesses. Jessie did well during her internships and worked to improve her speed, accuracy, and professionalism. Jessie developed and refined skills that would ensure her success in competitive employment.

Jessie obtained employment through her last internship rotation at Giant Eagle- Grove City. Jessie is currently working in the Prepared Foods Department as a Prepared Foods Clerk. Jessie has been trained to run the cash register, serve customers, and prepare food items to be sold. Jessie's supervisor reported that Jessie is always friendly and works great with Giant Eagle customers. He has stated that Jessie is doing a

wonderful job and is an asset to her team. Jessie is responsible on a weekly basis for obtaining her schedule for Giant Eagle and contacting Franklin County Board of DD to schedule her transportation.

Jessie has excelled in the *LIFEWorks* Program. Jessie states that she enjoys her job and its flexibility so she can still participate in Special Olympics. Jessie takes initiative to do tasks on her own without the assistance of fellow team members and provides excellent customer service. Jessie has shown perfect attendance while in the *LIFEWorks* program and at Giant Eagle. Jessie was entered into a drawing at Giant Eagle for perfect attendance and won a \$50 gift card of her choice.

CRYSTAL'S STORY
Hocking County



Crystal is an astounding worker; during her first six week internship rotation in *LIFEWorks* she was offered a job at the Hocking College Mailroom. However, Crystal decided not to take the offer because she was still interested in exploring other work options.

Crystal then completed an internship rotation at Hocking Woods Nature Center, a branch of Hocking College, as well as a rotation at Logan Library. Logan Library was very happy with her shelving abilities and was very happy to have her there. During the time that Crystal has been in the program she has also been taking classes through Hocking College and is working to complete a degree in computer science.

Crystal is now Job Development and is exhibiting the same enthusiasm for searching for a job as she did while doing the work rotations.

ALI'S STORY

Union County



Ali has a strong desire to become a dog groomer. "I love animals and being a dog groomer allows me to be around animals every day," quipped Ali. "I am passionate about this! I want to be a dog groomer!"

Ali and her job developer began the job seeking process by having discussions with several area dog groomers and learned there were two paths that led to this career, "formal" schooling and "on the job (OJT)" training. For various reasons the second option was selected and an internship was set-up at a local dog grooming emporium. Ali started as a dog bather, the first step of the "OJT" path to become a dog groomer. She began this experience with much enthusiasm. Working with a job coach, Ali worked diligently to learn all aspects of her job.

The biggest challenge she faced was that this establishment was quite busy which left her very little time to learn new aspects of the actual grooming process. In other words, she completed her tasks every day but was not learning much to advance her career.

A second internship was then made available at a smaller dog groomer. This business was very excited to "jump on board" and enhance Ali's dog bathing and dog grooming skills. The pace of this groomer has been a perfect fit for a training situation and Ali is learning much about her future career. The team now feels stronger than ever that this is a goal well within Ali's reach and is looking forward to developing a permanent position as dog groomer. George Finn, WorkNet's Job Developer stated, "Many times people have expressed an interest in working with animals;

however, most have found that the simple pleasures of feeding and playing with the animals is far outweighed by the dirty and smelly duties needed to care for animals in business a setting." Because of this, several members of Ali's vocational team had initial reservations about this goal but her determination and commitment to working with animals has been very convincing. Ali's coach quoted "I admire Ali's work ethic. She is definitely in this for the good, the bad and the smelly."

Her commitment to working with and being with animals has been demonstrated on a daily basis with her *LIFEWorks* internship at The Dog House in Richwood, Ohio. "I like working at The Dog House because it gives me hands-on experience of working with many different breeds of dogs," stated Ali. This is one young lady who is well on the way to realizing her dreams.....

Preble County Welcomes New Director

Preble County Board of Developmental Disabilities recently named Terry Stevens as the new director for the Adult Services Division replacing Nathan Beck who accepted a similar position in Hamilton County. Terry previously worked as the Workshop Business Manager for L&M Products for three years. She attended Indiana University East and received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a double concentration in accounting and finance, and is a lifetime member of the Business National Honor Society.

Working for the Preble County Board of DD has been an incredible learning experience for Terry, "I recognized early on the importance of networking and building strong teams within LM and throughout the community. As director, I will continue to build strong partnerships with businesses within the community. Preble County is an amazing community and through continued collaboration *together*, we are creating opportunities for a lifetime!"

2010 OAAS Board of Directors

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