



TCV MH/MR, Inc. News



Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Inc. Agency Newsletter



Arlene Shanks dusting a client's room



Volunteers receiving tasks for the day



Kathy Becker hard at work

TCV MH/MR, Inc. Caring Day

TCV MH/MR, Inc. held a Caring Day in late February for employees, board members and partners to contribute to the beautification of our New Homestead House located at 1800 West Street (front) in Homestead. The volunteers toured the facility, learned what programs/services will be provided in the new location, scrubbed, cleaned, dusted, painted, etc. to help get the space ready for our tenants that will be moving into the new site in the near future.

TCV MH/MR, Inc. purchased the building from the Eastern Orthodox Foundation in the fall. The Caring Day complemented daily work being done concurrently by TCV departments. Daily work includes: preparing and painting all rooms and corridors, scrubbing carpets, replacing worn floor tile and carpeting, installing new door/lock hardware on all doors, replacing acoustical ceiling tile and improving the plumbing, electrical, as well as planning for security, phones and computer systems.

The agency would like to thank **Hruska Plumbing, Lins Elevator** and **Eliminator Pest Control** for their donations toward donuts, pizza and drinks for the volunteers. Volunteers continued their Caring Day by bringing in donations of non-perishables to donate to a local food pantry.

Special thanks to **Jerry Potts** for coordinating this event and the maintenance department for all of their hard work. We also had three special volunteers, **Nick Marquis**, from PNC Bank who assisted TCV with the mortgage for the Homestead Property, **Sean O'Connor**, TCV Board Member and **Judy Monahan Grystar** who worked so hard to see this project completed.

The volunteers and participating staff exemplify the true spirit of TCV's Vision, Mission and Values. Thank you to everyone involved. TCV is planning to move into the new building by the end of May.

Thank you to these special employee volunteers:

Tom Bach	Patti Ferron	Kym King	Mary Jo Napolitano	Mimi Silinski
Kathy Becker	Patti Friedrich	Marci Laskey	Jason Pingor	Janet Stanich
Sheila Brennen	John Gregor	Shannon McCleary	George Poser	Mike Thomas
Janet Carroll	Dee Guidish	Gibby Mehalik	Jerry Potts	Olivia Zitelli
Dave Chara	Mark Heastings	Kim Mintus	Ron Rodman	Martha Zucco
Susan Crist	Phil Ionadi	Janice Morris	Chuck Schaffold	
Pinky Danchak	Mubarik Ismaeli	Nick Mroziak	Arlene Shanks	
Amy Duhig	Brenda Keys	Dottie Napolitano	Fran Sheedy Bost	

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Steel Valley ATF News

~Nancy Janosko

In March, radio personality **Jimmy Roach** from Froggy radio came to the Steel Valley Adult Training Facility to celebrate one of the consumer's birthdays. Jimmy has been gracious to come every year, for the past nine years, to celebrate someone's birthday. Thank you to Jimmy for being such a nice guest and for bringing Froggyland T-shirts for the ATF consumers.



Celebration of Success

The Conference of Allegheny Providers sponsored "Celebration of Success" on April 2, 2009, at Peters Place Restaurant in Bridgeville to honor individuals with mental retardation for their achievements.

TCV's **Ronald H.** received the Lifetime Achievement Award due to the dedication to his work at the Steel Valley ATF Program. Ronald comes to work at 7:30 each morning to begin his housekeeping work and participates in all areas of the enclave program. He is never late and is always dependable. He has been a role model for other consumers to emulate. Before attending the SV ATF, Ronald worked in the kitchen of the Homestead Hospital now known as the TCV's New Homestead House. Ronald was born and raised in Homestead and has been a positive influence to his community.



Troy Wise (SV ATF Assistant Supervisor) presented the award to Ronald. **Mrs. H.**, Ronald's mother attended, along with friends, **Jim M.**, **Tommy F.**, **Anthony C.** MR Director, **Tom Bach** also came to see Ronald receive the well deserved award. **Congratulations!**

Steel Valley ATF Idol

The Steel Valley ATF has officially started its Idol Competition. Each consumer has picked out a song of their choice and they perform each Friday afternoon at 1 PM. Two judges have the difficult task of eliminating one contestant at the end of each show. There is a ton of talent this year!

The winner as well as the 1st and 2nd place finishers at the end of the competition will receive an award.



Shriner's Circus

The all new Shrine Circus appeared at Mellon Arena from Friday, April 3 through Sunday, April 5, 2009, and featured a special appearance by the Amazing Spiderman! The Mental Retardation Department received donated tickets to the circus from Mellon Arena to enjoy acrobatics, clowns, juggling, amazing equestrian feats and more! One of the attendees, **Kenny**, said that the circus was "so nice! I really liked Spiderman the best!"

Everyone who attended had a great time! Thank you to staff at Mellon Arena for their generosity!

Special Olympics Gold Medal Winner

~Melanie Milko

Congratulations to **Nicole D.** for coming in 1st Place and winning the Gold Medal in swimming at the Special Olympics. Nicole practiced for the Special Olympics a lot and was one of the lucky participants chosen as finalists to compete for the Gold Medal!

Employment Services Success Story

~ Christina Smouse

The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh has a new addition. It's our very own **Jennifer Z.** from Homestead! She is a member of the museums' cleaning crew and has been working there for over two months. The *Environmental Services/Janitorial Program at CCAC* awarded her a certificate for successfully retaining her employment at the Museum for over five weeks.

When asked what she likes best about her job, she replied "The people are nice and I like having extra money." When asked if there were any barriers to working, she replied "My attitude was a barrier. Before, I was always frustrated, depressed and angry. Now, I feel better about myself and I don't have time to go to the hospital!" Jen has been doing so well and everyone is really proud of her. She's come along way. When asked if she would recommend Employment Services to other people, she replied "Yes because they help you get a job!"

On a more personal note, some of Jens' favorites are: the color blue, Papa V's tuna fish sandwich, Mountain Dew and the country band Alabama. She also likes to listen to music and watch reruns of ER.



Welcome to new employees!

Laura Borucki - SV COG
William Krall - St. Roberts
Josh Newcomer - SV COG
Darlene Brown - SV COG
Beth Kytka - St. Roberts
Karisa Olson - St. Roberts
Gary Jones - St. Roberts
JoVonne Tabb - St. Roberts
Tremayne White - HH - TNS
Shelly Hickey - St. Roberts
Josephine Dieterle - Southside
Kattie Yonko - Tioga St.



Goodbye and Good luck!

Robin Crawford - SV COG
Tami Lewis - Munhall Apts
Vanae Hicks - St. Roberts
Dorian Page - St. Roberts
Kimberly Wilson - St. Roberts
Sasha Wimbs - St. Roberts
Judy Schuetz - Turtle Creek
Aeisha Carter - Tioga St.
Mark Heastings - HH - TNS
Amber Vasquez - SV COG
Nadina Bembic - SV COG
Hudhaifa Ismaeli - Mt. Washington

Penny Wars

~Shannon McCleary

The youth from TCV's After School program participated in an activity that gave them the opportunity to give back to the community. The youth started a penny competition called "Penny Wars" to help raise money to donate to a local charity. By working together, they raised \$300 in pennies!

While the youth collected pennies for the Penny Wars, they researched local charities within the community and voted on which they wanted to give their penny collection. The youth decided to donate the \$300 to the Nyia Page Memorial Fund. Nyia Page was the 23-month infant who died after being left in an abandoned Rankin park last winter. Rankin Police **Chief Ryan Wooten** initially began collecting donations to remember Nyia through the Nyia Page Memorial Park. The Rankin community has really supported this project and the youth at After School wanted to contribute.

Three youth from the after school program presented the check for \$300 to Chief Wooten in February. The chief was very grateful for the donation and explained how the money would be helpful once the weather warmed up and work can begin on the memorial. The youth also discussed the possibility of helping to plant flowers and beautify the memorial once the time came.

Very often people underestimate the power of a penny. Nevertheless, one by one these pennies add up! It is important to show young people that they have the ability to create positive change within their own community. As children help others, they develop generosity and moral character, and they learn the skills and responsibilities that make them better individuals.



L-R - Officer Darnell Y., Paul R., Chief Ryan Wooten, Amairis B., Tavone W. and Officer Richard Adams

Tri Boro CTC Coalition Progress Report to Community Leaders

~Bernie Galanko

On March 11, 2009 the Tri Boro Communities That Care (CTC), with TCV MH/MR, Inc. as the lead agency, conducted a meeting at UPMC Braddock Hospital for community leaders from Swissvale, Rankin, Braddock and North Braddock to provide an overview of Tri Boro CTC's recent accomplishments. In addition, coalition representative **Mike Langan** briefed those in attendance on the contents of its Federal Drug Free Communities Grant application through which the coalition is seeking needed funding to continue community building activities for the next 5 years. The CTC submitted the grant at the end of March. SAMHSA will announce grant awardees in August.

In addition to the grant presentation, **Tracy Schultz**, the PA Regional Strategic Consultant for CTC sites, gave a presentation of the findings of the Tri Boro youth survey conducted from Fall 2007 through Spring 2008. The CTC had 192 youth ages 12 to 19 from the communities of Braddock, Rankin, Swissvale and North Braddock that participated in the survey. Ms. Schultz reported two key findings of the survey 1) Tri Boro youth experience higher rates of marijuana and alcohol use than students surveyed statewide; and 2) higher than statewide averages of being threatened with weapons in the community and receiving suspensions from school.

The mission of the Tri Boro CTC coalition is to develop community partnerships and attract new resources needed to reduce levels of these and other problems confronting youth in our communities on a daily basis. **Bernie Galanko** reported on some recent accomplishments of the coalition and member organizations. One accomplishment included TCV MH/MR Inc.'s implementation of the award winning violence prevention program CASASTART through funding provided by PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

Thank you to representatives from the offices of U.S. Senator Arlen Specter, Congressman Mike Doyle, State Senators Sean Logan and Paul Costa and Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato; Tri Boro police departments' reps; representatives from United Way and many other service provider agencies for attending the meeting.. In all over 40 people attended the event. All attendees were invited to join member organizations in the Tri Boro CTC coalition in order to become catalysts of change in the community.

THANK YOU for the Kind Donations to TCV MH/MR, Inc.

Ms. Sally Davis

In memory of Ralph Trew in honor of Blaine:

Dr. and Mrs. Edward Kernick
Michael and Marie Asztalos
Doreen Varuolo for Glenwood Condominium Association
Jones Automatic Sprinkler, Inc.
Terry Kenneweg
David and Nancy Rosensteel
Claudia and Nicholas Hickly
Henry and Linda Haller
RI Medical Society/IBC
Mary Jo Geyer
Ray Burdett
Joanne and Jeffrey Trew
Senior Citizens Club of Monroeville
William Biddle and Laura Loeffler
Joseph and Evelyn Geyer
Jack and Kathleen Fabry

In honor of Judy Monahan for the After School Program

Mary Gallagher

In memory of Mel Haber:

Judy Monahan Grystar
Mimi Silinski
Josie Ulrich
John Lovelace
Ed and Sue Kalson
Lu Conser
Joanna Minicucci

United Way

Sean O'Conner
Preston Walsh
Rosario Colucci
Ann Cellurale
Dan Gass
Paul Wittman

ACT Against Violence Program

~Lisa Freeman

Congrats to the kid's team of TCV MH/MR, Inc. for their nomination to pilot ACT Against Violence: Parents Raising Safe Kids Program in local communities. The American Psychological Association developed ACT with the goal of educating parents, educators and other professionals involved in young children's lives about family violence prevention. Through ACT, adults involved in the lives of children ages birth to 8 years learn violence prevention skills.

The parenting program currently has 19 parents enrolled in the eight-week class session. The parents represent the different communities along the Mon Valley area; however, most of the families are from the Braddock, Rankin or North Braddock area. Participant Natalie M. says that she and others are participants of the program because they would like to "to be updated on parenting trends and how to deal with aggressive behavior. The participants range from very young parents to grandmothers raising grandchildren. The program is very understanding. It teaches us how we view and how to deal with bad habits in order to deal with children. We are taught not to yell, but how to reprimand in a quiet and stern way. We are being taught all facets of dealing with children of the new millennium."

At the outset of this initiative, TCV received overwhelming support from our community providers and would like to thank Children's Hospital's Family Care Connection, Braddock Employment and Training Center and 4 Kids Early Learning Network for their generous assistance in making this parenting program a wonderful experience for our families.



Lisa, program facilitator, presenting techniques to participants



Parenting class attendees

Thank you to the United Way of Allegheny County for the generous financial support to fund this parenting program. The United Way is interested in expanding this anti-violence research-based program that mobilizes communities and educates families and caregivers to help protect children and youth from violence before it occurs.

For information please contact:

Lisa Freeman, TCV MH/MR, Inc. ACT Program facilitator

Phone: 412 464-1522 x 570

Email: lfreeman@tcvmhmr.org

11th Annual Toward a Brighter Future Golf Outing

It's time to start getting ready for the 2009 Team Amcom Golf Benefit to support TCV MH/MR, Inc at **Southpointe Golf Club** in Canonsburg!

As in previous years, we need the help and support of golfers and sponsors. Please join us by sponsoring at a level that best represents your support of the TCV MH/MR, Inc. mission!

Sponsorship levels include: Title - \$5,000, **Platinum** - \$2,500, **Gold** - \$1,500, **Silver** - \$1,000, **foursomes** - \$700, **individual golfers** - \$180, **lunch only** - \$50, **table sponsor 1** (display your company's literature)- \$350, **table sponsor 2** (lunch table for 8 people) - \$500, **program ad** - \$250 and **hole sponsors** - \$125.

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL! If you send in your paid registration by May 31st for a foursome or individual golfer, you get **10% off!** That means instead of a \$700 foursome, you get a foursome for \$630! Instead of \$180 for an individual golfer, you get to golf for \$162! Please note that the special is not applicable for sponsorship levels.

All golfers will receive green fees, cart, locker and bag service, free drinks on the course, two meals (continental breakfast and lunch), door prizes and awards.

If you have any further questions or would like to participate, please contact Kimberly King at **412-351-0222 x420** or kking@tcvmhmr.org.

A golf brochure can also be downloaded from the News and Events section of our website, www.tcv.net.

Thank you to the Staunton Farm Foundation!

TCV MH/MR, Inc. would like to thank the **Staunton Farm Foundation** for approving grant funding to our Tri Boro CASASTART program. TCV applied for a grant through the Staunton Farm Foundation to receive funds to match years 3 and 4 of a four year grant that TCV succeeded in obtaining from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

CASASTART provides integrated, coordinated services that positively affects children within their family, school and the community settings and relies on strong partnerships between schools, service providers, law enforcement officers, juvenile justice and the parents and caregivers of children within the program. Services include case management and social support, educational services (after-school and within community settings), family services, recreational activities, mentoring, community policing, incentives and criminal justice intervention.

TCV's goals for CASASTART include reducing violations in the criminal justice system and substance use and improving school attendance, academic performance and family functioning.

Thank you to the following partners who help to make the Tri Boro CASASTART program a success:

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime And Delinquency
The National Center on Addiction And Substance Abuse
Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc.
Woodland Hills School District
Local Youth Families and Residents
Organizations and Service Providers from The Tri Boro Communities That Care
Braddock, North Braddock and Rankin Police Departments
The Braddock Rotary and Other Business Representatives
Allegheny County Juvenile Probation
The Pittsburgh Mediation Center – Restorative Justice Program
The District Magistrates and Elected Officials That Serve the Tri Boro Communities
Members of the Tri Boro Ministerial/Faith Community
The YMCA at UPMC Braddock
Rankin Christian Center
The Braddock Public Library

TCV MH/MR, Inc. Employment Services Resource Fair Was a Great Success!

On Wednesday, February 11, 2009, TCV MH/MR, Inc.'s Employment Services Department sponsored their first annual Resource Fair at the Westinghouse Human Services Center in Turtle Creek. Twenty-three organizations participated and shared information about transportation, benefits counseling, training programs, volunteer opportunities and much more! In addition, the PA State Civil Service Commission conducted a workshop on how to apply for state jobs.



Kelly and Amy manning TCV's table

The purpose of the fair was to help the community learn about employment related resources that can assist with getting a job or volunteer opportunity. It was also a great opportunity for organizations to network with each other to learn about services available within each of the organizations. TCV MH/MR, Inc. is looking forward to hosting the second annual resource fair in the future!

If you would like to participate in the next resource fair please or if you are looking for qualified individuals to fill positions at your company, please contact **Amy Sljva-Blystone** at (412) 824-8510 ext. 692



TCV DSC Coming To a Theater Near You!

~Darlene Karpaski

TCV MH/MR Inc.'s Peer Run Decision Support Center (DSC) was selected to be filmed as part of a \$2 Million project sponsored by the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) at SAMHSA. DSC Staff, outpatient staff, consumers, and Dr's Kubrin and Nathaniel were all star characters in the video production.

The goal of the DVD is to introduce and encourage the use of Shared Decision-Making (SDM) in Psychiatry. The project will result in two short videos, one for providers and one for consumers and will include interviews and other footage from TCV and from the SDM center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock.

Advocates for Human Potential (AHP) is conducting the project and Pendragwn Productions is producing the videos. AHP plans to work on a website related to Shared Decision-Making, which will include the videos, video clips and other resources about Shared Decision-Making.

TCV MH/MR, Inc. is one of only a few sites nationwide that has implemented SDM for mental health services. The Decision Support Center is an integral part of our Outpatient Services in Homestead. At the client's doctor appointment, they check into the DSC and complete a Common Ground Assessment. The doctors use the assessment as the central part of the psychiatric visit. It helps the client focus their thoughts before the visit on how they have been and what decisional uncertainty they may be having about taking psychiatric medicines. Lastly, the client can state in their own words what they want to achieve in their session as well as their own personal medicine (activities that they do to keep themselves well). When used by physicians, this approach helps to give power back to the client by both of them having their own copy of the assessment. This transparency changes the power dynamic in the session and ends with the doctor and client collaboratively creating a Shared Decision which highlights the next steps in treatment from the perspective of the client. Clients have shared that prior to this, they thought the doctor or medicines could fix them. Now, with the help of this assessment and the Peer Support they receive in the DSC, they have learned about the need to take a more active role in their recovery coupled with medicines. One of the other outcomes we are seeing is a higher adherence to medication regimes.



Employee Spotlight

Every newsletter will randomly profile an employee. Who will be in the next issue??

Employee Name: Ruth Harrison

Site Location: Alternatives, South Side

How long have you worked here? I started working here in January

What is your position? Intervention Specialist

What do you like best about working at TCV? Or what do you like the best about your job? I really appreciate the fact that we work as a team

What was your very first job? Office Work at the Penn Hills Senior Citizens Center when I was 16

What is your favorite movie of all time? I don't have a favorite movie. I love any movie with Betty Davis or Kathy Bates. I really appreciated the movie Diary of a Mad Black Woman.

If you could have dinner with anyone (living or dead) who would you choose? I would love dinner with Tom Petty, Benjamin Netanyahu and Simon Wiesenthal

What three things can always be found in your refrigerator? Mustard, Heinz Ketchup and Mayonnaise

Favorite vacation spot? I love the boardwalk

What accomplishment would you say that you are most proud of? I recently took care of my mom for 3 months who was dying of lung cancer. I have no regrets, not one. I feel this is a great accomplishment.

Whom do you most admire and why? I admire Billy Graham because he has never had a scandal or impropriety.

Do you have any pets? Names? Three cats: Bob, Ivan and Jim



Do you want to quit smoking?

TCV conducts ongoing sessions based on the Freedom from Smoking Program of the American Lung Assoc. for TCV employees who want help in trying to cut down or quit using tobacco. The program consists of eight sessions, meeting weekly for one hour. We offer qualifying participants vouchers for free nicotine patches. *Funded by Tobacco Free Allegheny and the PA Department of Health.* Call 412-464-1522 x500 for info.

TCV MH/MR, Inc. Artist Calendar Submission

TCV MH/MR, Inc. is now accepting applications from all clients for artwork submission for the TCV MH/MR, Inc. Calendar and Annual Report. **ANY TCV MH/MR, Inc. CLIENT**, including children, can submit up to four pieces of art to be considered by the Calendar committee to be included in the calendar. This includes paintings, drawings, ceramics (hand created ceramics, not poured out of a mold), photography, etc. Please contact Kym at 412-351-0222 x420 for guidelines. Deadline is June 26, 2009.

Please remember to ask your family and friends to designate Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. as the recipient of their United Way gift through the Contributor Choice option when completing the United Way form, or donate online at www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org.

TCV's United Way code is #136.

A copy of the official registration and financial information of Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR, Inc. may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Requests for additional information should be directed to Kimberly King, 723 Braddock Avenue, Braddock, PA 15104, (412)351-0222 x420, email: KMroziak@tcvmhmr.org

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