



New
Horizons
Resources, Inc.

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Spring 2008



You & Us, A Success!

The start of 2008 has proven to be a very good year for us at New Horizons. We are settling into our new Training & Administration Facility nicely and have been attracting more friends and resources. Below are a few good news stories we wish to share with you:

- ◆ NHR was awarded \$300,000 for its Quality Improvement through Credentialing and Culture Building Grant by The New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. NHR was one of 17 not-for-profit agencies across the state to be awarded funding. NHR was one of only 4 agencies to receive a grant of this size. This money is dedicated to continue our tradition of staff development, credentialing and organizational culture building for NHR employees and to expand our efforts to bring this training and organizational development collaboratively to sister agencies in the Mid-Hudson region. What distinguishes NHR is our history with the development of credentialing, our close collaboration with the SEIU and networking with other organizations. Our commitment to DSPs (Direct Support Professionals) and Frontline Supervisors is extremely strong. It is these employees who define the quality of services and supports of the people we support. Committed staff define great service for the next generation.
- ◆ A grant of \$305,000 was awarded to NHR from the Dyson Foundation to fund technology for our training center.



Pictured Above: Stephen Picciolo, Stacey Alexander and Jay Glass from Deer Run. Stacey was the 1st in New York to complete the Direct Support Professional Apprenticeship Program with the NYS Dept. of Labor.

- ◆ The NHR Foundation was awarded \$10,000 from Advanced Network & Services, Inc. for the creation of a Learning Media Center. This center is designed to enhance and assist classified students with special education IEPs which delineate goals as proscribed by New York State Department of Education Special Education Law.
- ◆ Briggs Farm Wins Award! See page 6!
- ◆ NHR was given a gracious donation of furniture from KeyBank. KeyBank, who recently relocated their offices to Oakwood Commons was kind enough to donate a wide variety of much needed furniture for our new office. We are grateful to them for all that they do for us.
- ◆ Michael Gonyea launches his own website for his stained glass creations, see page 6.
- ◆ NHR closes on a new home in the City of Poughkeepsie.

News from the Foundation Office Beth Cookinham, Foundation Director

Spring Into Summer Craft Show

June 7 & 8, 2008

James J. McCann Center
Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY

10 am ~ 4 pm

Featuring 40 local artisans including:

Jewelry
Fine Art
Pottery
Silks
Photography
and much more!



Picture above by Scott Garrity

A Note From the Executive Director....

The Meaning of Words and Numbers

NYS-CARES III: 2008-09

By Regis Obijiski

New York State—Creating Alternatives in Residential Environments and Services (NYS-CARES) has provided residential and other opportunities to thousands of New Yorkers for the last ten years. NYS-CARES III is the latest iteration of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities' (OMRDD) commitment to fund supports and services.

The funding will support new residential opportunities and day services, along with appropriate service coordination opportunities. It also includes funding for family supports for individuals while they wait for their out-of-home residential services to be developed.

To interpret the meaning and application of this funding stream, it is useful to refer to applicable state budget language, the previously dominant funding vehicle which ended at the end of 2007, and the actual application of dollars to districts for the current fiscal year.

OMRDD's 2008-09 Budget Briefing Quotes and What They Mean:

- ◆ *“NYS-CARES is a true partnership among government, citizens and nonprofit agencies... individuals with developmental disabilities and parents....”*
- ◇ Meaning: OMRDD wants to hear from constituents in forums such as the Dutchess County Public Forum and other gatherings of stakeholders. Public forums are an opportunity not only to listen but also to respond.
- ◆ *“2008-09...begins a multi-year process of rebalancing base resources to rely more on options that promote independence and more person-centered choice and less on traditional capital and staff-intensive residential and day services.”*
- ◇ Meaning: there will be less of what is known as brick-and-mortar development, like group homes.
- ◆ *“Greater reliance on the use of natural supports is a critical aspect of this transformation...like family supports, including crisis intervention, respite services....”*
- ◇ Meaning: more services and supports where people with disabilities already live.
- ◆ *“OMRDD will be encouraging the growth of supportive and other less than 24-hour residential options for individuals who are interested in living as independently as*



The NHR Newsletter is a quarterly publication produced by the agency to keep our friends informed about NHR's current activities.

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AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

NHR In The Community Helping Others...

NHR Walks In Heart Walk

Congratulations to Gerry DePorres and this year's NHR Heart Walk team! Together they raised \$1,935 for the Dutchess & Ulster County Heart Association. This year's team included: Eric Bertin, David Diaz, William Bride, Tom & Christine McCluskey, Regis Obijiski, Beverly Kaufman, David Bloom, Paul Molloy, Matt Sherlock, Carl Bartles, Bruce Pleasants, Mary & Emma McNamara, Maryann Simonelli, Jennifer Sucato, Carla & Chloe Lawson, Kristin Tompkins, Vicki Kaan-Smith, Mike Dietz, Marge Dalia, Jayne Violon, Elaine Fiore, Kelsey Lucas & Linda Cussick.

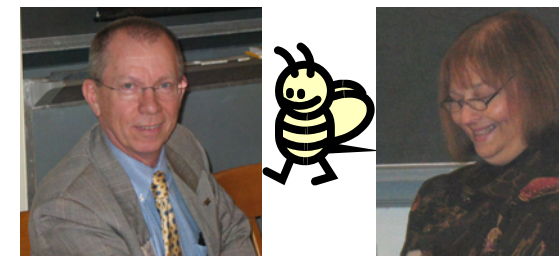
A special thanks to Lida Viruet and Steve Giorgiou for helping to sell American Heart bracelets and pins. Thanks to Gerry DePorres for this 11th year of coordination NHR's involvement in the walk!



Pictured to the left: Members of the 2008 New Horizons Heart Walk Team. Pictured above: Eric Bertin

Thank You For Your Support In Making the NHR Blood Drive a Success!!!
By Jayne Violon

33 people participated in the blood drive, 29 pints of blood were collected. Special thanks to Gerry DePorres and Tom McCluskey for helping with the set up and clean up, Carla Lawson and Kelly Sprague for their help recruiting donors, Jerilynne Smith for baking the delicious cookies and Tom McCluskey again for his technical assistance with the video/music. **MOST OF ALL THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO DONATED BLOOD. WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT THE BLOOD DRIVE WOULD NOT BE A SUCCESS.**



NHR Participates in Spelling Bee

New Horizons was happy to once again participate in the Literacy Connections 16th Annual Spelling Bee. The event was held on March 18th at Vassar College. Literacy Connections offers no-cost tutoring for functionally illiterate adults.

Pictured to the left, Sally Heilman and Melinda Riggs discuss how to spell "Mahatma". Regis Obijiski and Ellen Devorsetz also participated as Pronouncers.

We thank KeyBank for their continued sponsorship!

New!

If you are interested in receiving the NHR newsletter or other periodic information electronically, please email bcookinham@nhrny.org.

AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

Dreams Really Do Come True by Lynda DiPressi



At left: Belle and Linda

This is Disney's "Year of a Million Dreams" and this year Linda Sofka of the Gerry Rd. IRA had a very special dream come true. Linda has gone through some difficult times over the past couple of years and her one wish was to return to that magical place she loves so much. Thanks to the efforts of New Horizons and her mom, Linda (accompanied by Lynda DiPressi) spent a fun filled week this past fall at Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Linda met Mickey and all of his friends. She dined with Pooh and Tigger too. From It's a Small World to watching in awe the magnificent spectacle of Fantasmic we enjoyed every magical moment. Thank you New Horizons and Mom for making this special lady's dream come true.



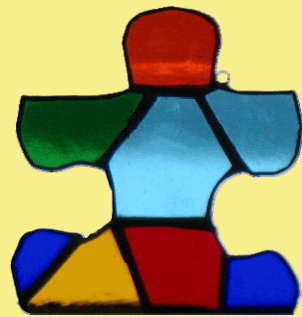
At right: Linda, Mickey, and Lynda

Congratulations to Michael Gonyea

Congratulations to Michael for launching his new website for Michael Gonyea Stained Glass Studio.

Please visit Michael's website and view his wonderful work, including his signature puzzle piece which is a symbol of autism.

www.gonyeastainedglass.com



**25th Anniversary
New Horizons Foundation
Invitational Golf Tournament**



**Monday, May 12, 2008
Dutchess Golf & Country Club**

\$175 per player/\$700 per foursome
Or join us for dinner- \$50 per person

For more information or sponsor opportunities, contact Beth Cookinham at 473-3000 x 322 or bcookinham@nhrny.org.

Briggs Farm Wins Award!

By Jerilynne Smith

Congratulations to Regis Obijiski who, on behalf of our Briggs Farm program in Hyde Park, was recognized as a New State Farmer loved by the people of New York! The award is based on his commitment to NY agriculture, the environment and the local community. The Farm was recognized in the category "NY Specialties" for the adult day habilitation program and activities that enhance the lives of all New Yorkers. One such activity this past year was growing pumpkins at the Farm for another not-for-profit agency to raise funds to provide art and music classes for individuals with developmental disabilities. "Caring for the animals, growing and harvesting vegetables, and other farm activities provides the individuals we serve with a sense of accomplishment," says Melinda Riggs, who nominated Regis for the award.

- ◇ Meaning: simply what it says—encouraging less than 24-hour residential options.

NYS-OPTS (Options For People Through Services)

- ◆ Although an arduous and lengthy process, OPTS was a very generous funding source. At the end of 2007, OMRDD announced that OPTS is retiring. OPTS projects that are already in contract will be funded, but there will be no new OPTS proposals that will be considered for funding.
- ◆ The reasons OPTS retired are:
 - ◇ The funded projects were not as individualized as was hoped;
 - ◇ diminishing federal dollars to New York; and
 - ◇ federal regulations advanced to target funding reductions to people with developmental disabilities.
- ◆ Next steps after OPTS
 - ◇ Instead of the central office of OMRDD managing new service opportunities, the DDSO district offices will manage the allocations specified by OMRDD.
 - ◇ In addition, transparency will prevail in that all stakeholders will understand the dollar value of services and supports. Such transparency is necessary in an environment where there is fierce competition for public funds.
 - ◇ A deputy commissioner at OMRDD was quoted: "the federal gravy train has left the station and is picking up speed."

NYS-CARES III Allocation to the Taconic District (Dutchess, Ulster, Putnam, Columbia, Greene)

- ◆ The Taconic DDSO received its allocation for the coming fiscal year (April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009) from OMRDD at the end of February.
- ◆ Only 14 people in our five-county Taconic district will be funded with \$943,000.
- ◆ The distribution took into account the general population of the state, the registration list of need and the total residential capacity.

- ◆ 175 people in the Taconic district are requesting a residence. However, 46% of these have DDP2 scores demonstrating a low need for direct care and a low behavioral manifestation. Many of the 46% are encouraged to consider seeking less than 24-hour supervised opportunities.
- ◆ According to the ISPM scores of those already in residences within our district, 8% demonstrate a very low need. Many of these individuals are encouraged to consider less than 24-hour supervised opportunities.
- ◆ OMRDD asserts that "we need to move beyond old assumptions that focused on supervised living" and "a vacancy in any supervised setting should be filled only with an individual whose needs clearly require 24-hour care."

Summary

A combination of a weakening economy, prevailing politics, and a philosophy of individualized services and supports is responsible for a major change in services for people with developmental disabilities for the foreseeable future in New York State. New high-cost service options, such as 24-hour residential opportunities, will continue but at much more modest levels. Individuals in certified residences, who can manage more independent living, will be encouraged to seek this out with assistance. Individuals currently seeking out-of-home residential opportunities will also be encouraged in the same way as much as possible. Those who can and wish to remain at home with their family will receive supports toward these ends.

All of this represents an abrupt shift away from expensive congregate services to lower-cost individualized supports. In many ways, these decisions will shake up our service system. Agencies like New Horizons need to become acquainted with this landscape, adjust to a new way of thinking and continue to do what is best for people with disabilities.

AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

Our commitment to our employees...

By Jerilynne Smith

Best Companies to Work For In New York—Survey Results !



Back in November of 2007, NHR staff were asked to participate in a workplace survey sponsored by the NYS Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management. There was a very quick turnaround for this survey—but despite the tight deadline—147 NHR staff members responded. What follows below is an excerpt from the results received by NHR.

The survey looked at the workplace from 3 perspectives: the individual, the workgroup; and, the organization as a whole. The individual perspective looked at how a staff person felt about their job and their relationship with their supervisor. The workgroup perspective looked at how the staff person felt about their immediate work environment and examined relationships among workers in a person’s department/site. The organization perspective looked at how the staff person felt about NHR as a culture and the effectiveness of senior management.

The survey is comprised of a series of questions in each of the three areas (individual, workgroup, organization). The staff person indicated their level of agreement with the statement. The responses were group as positive (that is, agreeing with the statement) and negative (disagreeing with the statement).

Overall the results were impressive: 89.74% of respondents had positive personal impressions of their job; 85.52% had positive impressions of their workgroup; and, 90.12% had positive impressions of NHR as a whole.

Close Up on the New Training Center at 123 West Road

The most prominent feature of the new Training and Administration Building at 123 West Road is, of course, the training space. The agency now proudly displays its 3000 square feet dedicated to training and professional development. The space is fully equipped with integrated projection and sound that can play any medium (from iPods to DVDs), a good quality sound system, and wireless technology for easier use of computer based programs. The room features accordion doors which can be used to divide the room into 1, 2, 3, or 4 separate training spaces. The new tables and chairs are both functional and comfortable. Thanks to this space, New Horizons Resources will not only be able to continue our efforts to build a highly trained direct care workforce but we will be able to expand them exponentially!



At left: Guy Milroy helps unload tables for the space

At right: two of the rooms set up for training



AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

Congratulations to NHR’s Latest Direct Care II Certificate Graduate: Barbara Delventura!



Pictured above, from left to right: Sam Laganaro (Director of Human Resources), Sandra Swan (Director of Community Services), Barbara Delventura (DSP and Direct Care Certificate II Graduate), and Regis Obijiski (Executive Director)

NHR is proud to announce that Barbara Delventura, a Direct Support Professional at our Morehouse-IRA, has earned the Direct Care II Certificate! Barbara says that she has learned so much in her 8 years with New Horizons, and that is due, in part, to this certificate program. It is an experience she recommends to everyone; the advantages are worth the time commitment and effort. She said that “it really expands your growth in the field because you learn so much that you might not otherwise be exposed to in your day-to-day job. The courses take you to another level.” She had the opportunity to meet other individuals who work in the field and to share experiences with them. As part of the program, Barbara also had the opportunity to complete several

internships as well. For one of them, she worked with our own Service Coordination Department! Though you can go to other agencies and learn, it can also be interesting and beneficial to get a more in-depth look at the agency you already work for. If you’re put-off by the idea of getting back into a classroom, Barbara can assure you that there is no need to worry. “There were people in my classes of all ages, sizes, backgrounds... Don’t be intimidated; the experience will only be an advantage in the long run. You will learn and grow and be able to do your job better. And it was fun!” NHR celebrated her accomplishment by treating her to lunch at The Dubliner in Poughkeepsie. See the after lunch mug shots to the right! The food was great but what was really special was hearing Barbara’s enthusiasm and commitment to her professional development.

Condition

By Paul Molloy

Like matchsticks to a tinderbox,
A spasm sparks my muscles.

Like ten thousand mice running up and down my legs,
A tremor sits me sideways.

Sometimes the tears have nowhere to go but up or down.
It is rough when laughing and crying is on the same breath.

Sometimes I want to laugh at a sad situation. Sometimes I
want to cry at a happy situation.
But we all cut onions on the cutting board.

I wanted to know every other condition
I wanted to drink them in
Through my own striped straw
But all I could ever understand was my own,
Just barely, with ink and brain
Together.

