

B the *Winter 2015* BEACON



"A new beginning"

Anniversaries in January, February, March

| | | | |
|---------------------|----|-------------------|----|
| Tarah Liljeberg | 5 | Maria Block | 11 |
| Courtne Ohms | 5 | Linda Dalland | 11 |
| Gale Pollard | 5 | Debra Dolney | 11 |
| Ruth Pooler | 5 | Dustin Doornink | 11 |
| Monica Aikin | 6 | Richard Knudtson | 11 |
| Angela Bautch | 6 | Diane Powell | 11 |
| Jennifer Berge | 6 | William Selenske | 11 |
| Seth Boodle | 6 | Jennifer Dippmann | 13 |
| Anne Focht | 6 | Judy Koxlien | 14 |
| Ashley LaPorte | 6 | Gail Glass | 16 |
| April Nutt | 6 | Rick Kayser | 16 |
| Michael Ottum | 6 | Sheryl Planque | 16 |
| Jamie Vander Velden | 6 | Debra Turner | 16 |
| Richard Wanek | 6 | Sadie Bygd | 17 |
| Eric Wohlt | 6 | Lisa Cunningham | 17 |
| Stephen Garrison | 7 | Terri Evans | 17 |
| Karen Kaufman | 7 | David Furst | 17 |
| Sarah Langin | 7 | William Stone | 17 |
| Sandra Lounsbury | 7 | Kathi Tollefson | 17 |
| Kathleen Martin | 7 | Debra Brown | 18 |
| Norma Ryan | 7 | Sharon Moss | 18 |
| Rebecca Tyjeski | 7 | Carrie Blanchard | 19 |
| Dawn Connell | 8 | Joseph Felling | 19 |
| Cheri Eden | 8 | Julie Lifto | 19 |
| Tyler Giedd | 8 | Andrew Wolf | 19 |
| Mandy O'Malley | 8 | Donna Ernst | 21 |
| Angelia Steen | 8 | Gordon O'Flanagan | 21 |
| Leigh Wahlen | 8 | Marni Waznik | 21 |
| Bernadine Wendt | 8 | Susan Wheeler | 21 |
| Joy Christner | 9 | Avis Wolske-Baker | 27 |
| Darren Cox | 9 | | |
| Amy Daniels | 9 | | |
| Jane Funk | 9 | | |
| Chris LeClair | 9 | | |
| Katherine Mozer | 9 | | |
| Erin Pascarella | 9 | | |
| Wendy Prigge | 9 | | |
| Elizabeth Wilcox | 9 | | |
| Vicki Brenizer | 10 | | |
| Miranda McCarron | 10 | | |
| Sarah Mohr | 10 | | |
| Colette Spielman | 10 | | |
| John Stearns | 10 | | |

Congratulations
to all of you who
have been here for
5 years or more!

Aurora
community services

CEO Corner

by Dave Barnard

As much as there are those who are trying to convince us that everything is improving and that you should be happy... it is rather apparent that this is just not completely true. The cost of consumer goods is increasing, taxes are increasing and the economic times are pinching everyone. Trying to improve our lives through healthier choices is tough too. We are pulled from all sides to do more with less and fitting in a healthier lifestyle is sometimes difficult. Although times are challenging, I want to remind you of one simple lesson that I believe can help all of us as we struggle with what to do to improve our lives. Whether it is to make ends meet economically or to improve our lives through healthier choices in our life style, this one message can help us improve.

This simple lesson was taught us many years ago in a galaxy far, far away by a little green being known as Yoda as he was mentoring Luke in the original Star Wars. Luke told Yoda that he would "try" to do whatever it was Yoda was asking him to do. Yoda's response was "There is no try - you either do or you do not" - a very simple, but very profound statement.

Many people are unhappy with the current state of their lives. They don't have enough money in their life to do the things that they want to do. They don't spend enough time with family and loved ones and they don't spend enough time taking care of themselves. In difficult economic times it is challenging to figure out what to do to improve your life. People know that they aren't happy with the present situation but they don't know what to do about it. They want to change it but they don't know how.

If you find yourself in this condition, take Yoda's advice to heart. Don't say to yourself that you are going to try to improve your situation, or that you are going to try to improve your life. Yoda would tell you, there is no try - you either do or you do not. Understand that despite the economic downturn that we are all facing, and

Continued next page

the struggles that we will all likely undergo, some people know how to turn difficulty into success.

For that reason, if you are considering the prospect of improving your life – a healthier lifestyle, more family time, sticking to a budget – you should make a commitment with yourself to do what’s necessary to improve. Saying that you are going to try to cope with these challenging times is unsatisfactory and potentially dangerous. When you inject “try” into the equation you are already admitting that failure is an option which makes it easier to give up and accept failure. By recognizing the reality that you either “do” or “do not” you are accepting responsibility and taking control to effect change. If you want it bad enough you will “do” and if it isn’t truly that

critical you will choose to “do not.”

Today is a great day to make a commitment to change. Identify the most important thing to you that needs improvement in your life right now – health, relationship, budget, etc. – and take the steps to make it happen. If you take “try” out of the equation you gain control over improving your life and create a path toward responsibility, confidence and success.

Thanks to each of you for all the wonderful things you “do” to help create great lives for those we serve.

Dave

A Day In The Life

By Terri Bollinger



IPS stands for Individual Placement and Support, an evidence-based approach to supported employment that is designed to assist people living with mental illness to work if they chose as part of their recovery. Multiple surveys have shown that people with mental illness want to work and it can impact their lives positively. Aurora currently contracts with Dunn,

Barron, Pierce and Washburn to provide IPS services. In March of 2014, Kara Lundequam joined the Vocational Services team as an Employment Specialist to provide IPS services in Washburn County. Recently she began providing IPS services to both Washburn and Barron counties.

One of the principals of IPS is to provide a team environment to an individual looking to return to work. An employment specialist works closely with the county mental health team, the individual and any other people or agencies providing other support services. IPS encompasses a community approach that provides an opportunity for everyone to work together. One example of this service is weekly face-to-face meetings between Kara and the IPS participant. In their community, based upon each person’s preference Kara assists individuals with applications, job search, and interviews.

To assist IPS participants with their job goals, she also meets with businesses in order to develop relationships. In IPS, employment specialists spend at least 65% of their time away from their offices, being out in the community.

Weekly IPS team meetings provides an opportunity for the employment specialist to meet with the mental health practitioners to discuss each individual. Mental health practitioners may include case workers, counselors, nurses, psychiatrists, and housing staff. Although the employment specialist is the central person who provides assistance with jobs goals and education plans, others also provide assistance in preparation for employment. For example, a psychiatrist or nurse practitioner might help someone with a medication adjustment so he/she was less fatigued at work. A case manager might help someone open a bank account so paychecks can be cashed.

When Kara was asked why she feels weekly meetings are a valuable factor in the success of IPS, she stated “Each team member brings something to the table which allows us to uncover likely challenges and barriers to successful employment. It is like peeling back an onion, you have to work through the layers to get to the true goals and challenges each person faces. Each person is unique and so are their goals. I have heard this before and it makes sense to me. IPS is a bus of opportunity and, the IPS participant is the bus driver. He or she decides where we are going as far as what their job goals are. I am sitting in the front seat next to them, holding the map. It is my job to help navigate their path to successful employment within their community.” In a few short months Kara has had 5 hires for IPS and hopes to double if not triple her success rate for 2015.

Employee of the Quarter



Chiara Andahazy, Program Manager II, is the Employee of the Quarter!

Chiara is very safety conscious and stresses the importance of healthy eating, portion control and doing the "right thing" with her staff and consumers. She works at a home which contains medical, physical and behavioral challenges. There is no one that is more on top of all the medical and safety concerns than Chiara.

Chiara always has what is best for the consumer front and center. She knows them all so well - their wants, needs, and what is best for them. She is always calm and always there for them. Chiara is knowledgeable of all consumers needs.

Chiara is very compassionate in everything she does, and with the consumers. She is very attentive with the maintenance of the home and the vehicles. She expects all the staff to do what is best at all times.

Chiara is always ahead of the game. She is very committed to doing the best job she can, no matter what. Doing the right thing is very important to her, for the staff, consumers, the home and Aurora.



Star of the Quarter



Orlando Simon, Maintenance, is the Star of the Quarter!

Orlando works throughout the Northwest region and insures all maintenance requests are handled timely and effectively. He is always safety conscientious and if he sees something that needs to be addressed he jumps in and does it.

Orlando is an integral employee, he goes beyond maintenance. He attends all of our social events. Whenever he is working in one of our homes, he is a part of the team, working with staff and consumers. All the consumer know who he is and want to be around him when he is working.

Orlando is absolutely a man of integrity. He is a very hard worker and our maintenance has never been better in the Northwest region. He does things right away, no just slapping it together here; he just calmly keeps on a

keeping on. From one job to the next. Efficiently and well done.

Though Orlando's job is not directly involved with our consumers, he is involved. He is well loved from consumers, to staff to management. Whatever we need him to do, he will, and always do it with a smile on his face.

Consumer Spotlight

By Paula Scheffler-Burkard



Richard has been a valuable team member at Taco John's in Menomonie since August 2014. He was originally hired to unload the delivery truck; however, within his first week of employment Taco John's requested he pick up additional hours washing dishes. Richard

happily accepted the additional job duties without hesitation and was able to transition between the two positions like a pro. Taco John's has recognized Richard's strong work ethic and efficiency and as a result offered him yet additional hours in the kitchen.

Richard has said that the food prepared at Taco John's is "delicious." His favorite food item is a burrito with super hot sauce. Richard is also quite fond of the potato oles dipped in guacamole.

Richard has proven his commitment to work as he never misses work. Whatever the circumstances may be, perhaps he is not feeling the best, or his car is buried in snow, Richard arrives with a smile. He works hard to provide the best service for the customers at Taco John's. Richard has set a great example of what it means to give your best every day!

Richard had limited experience working in the community, but he was determined to change that. He informed his vocational support team that he was really interested in working at Taco John's. As one of his favorite places to eat, Richard had established positive relationships with the employer by simply being a good customer. With the additional supports from the vocational IPS team Richard is successfully employed!

New Website

For all your Aurora Logo Wear, go to:
Clothing.AuroraServices.com

You can now purchase Aurora items 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from our NEW and improved website. There are over 60 items to choose from in a variety of colors. You can use your Aurora Gift Certificate (*formerly Aurora Bucks*), that is included, to make purchases. All past Aurora Bucks have been converted into gift certificate credit.

To use your credits, go to Clothing.AuroraServices.com and sign-in at the upper right corner of the screen. Your username is your Aurora employee number and then your first and last initials in uppercase (example: 0000AB). The password you need to enter is **AURORA1** in uppercase. Once you have logged in for the first time, you may change your password. At check out, you will see your Aurora Gift Certificate credit in the payment information section. The Aurora Gift Certificate is **ONLY** valid while an Aurora employee and is **NOT** transferable.

If you have any questions, please contact your supervisor.

Life Photo of the Month



If you have any questions or comments about the Beacon, please send them to: Beacon@AuroraServices.com or mail to: Stavroula at Aurora Community Services P.O. Box 68, Menomonie, WI 54751.