



“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.”

-Helen Keller

WINTER 2009

ColumbiaCare Newsletter



ColumbiaCare Services, Inc. Mission Statement:

“To promote the mental health and welfare of individuals and communities by developing progressive, regional systems of behavioral health care facilities and affiliated service programs in collaboration with public and private providers of social, judicial and health care services”.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I have recently been thinking back over the major events that have occurred during 2009, as most of us do this time of year. It truly has been a year that has seen some amazing ups and significant downs. Many of these have played out on the world stage, and we have all experienced them along side the rest of the nation. For instance, whether you voted for him or not, America kicked off this year with maybe one of the most historically significant events for America when the first African American President took office. We have taken great strides in science and medicine, while simultaneously bracing ourselves for possible threats such as computer worms and the HINI virus. We have said goodbye to several of our favorite politicians and performers, and we have also had the opportunity to welcome new “greats” to the scene.

We have lived through another year of national and global financial insecurity. We have also witnessed some amazing heroics, some that prevented major disasters such as the “Miracle on the Hudson”. These things come out in the news via television and internet, and everyone is aware of them, but I wanted to briefly touch on another category of life events that may go unnoticed by others, maybe even by those who work and live beside you on a daily

basis. I am speaking of personal triumphs and losses.

We certainly have ups and downs in our personal lives. You may have experienced smooth sailing in 2009 and I hope this is the case. But for some, this year may have brought financial hardship, a major life change, or some other significant loss. On behalf of ColumbiaCare I want to acknowledge that this may be true for some of you, and if it is, we are sincerely wishing you the best. I also want to take this chance to recognize and thank you for your contribution, even if it doesn't make the front page. I know that you are making a difference in the lives of some of society's most disabled individuals. During this holiday season, as you are busily working in the facilities (or the Administrative Office) caring for the needs of others as you do, I think it is important to remember how important it is to also take care of you. It is my hope that your experience here at ColumbiaCare is rewarding and I appreciate all of your hard work.

Wishing you a New Year filled with great things.

-Bob

NEW FACILITY UPDATE!: BAY APARTMENTS II

ColumbiaCare is excited for Bay Apartments II, one of our latest developments! This program will be similar to the current Bay Apartments, but is designed as a more permanent living solution. Bay Apartments II will be one bedroom units, with the exception of one two bedroom unit. Having each apartment structured like this will allow for family, case managers, home health givers, and others a place to visit each resident in their home with dignity, and not have to be in their sleeping space during the visit. It gives a place to entertain and take meals as most people living in the community do.

ColumbiaCare will serve as a ‘mentally ill-friendly landlord’ and cooperate with Coos County Mental Health to promote the mental health recovery of the residents of Bay Apartments II. Services will include creating a safe and attractive living environment and an apartment management that deals with issues and problems quickly,

in a non-accusatory fashion. We will also form a Tenant Association so that residents have a model of self-governance and have a forum for discussing and solving mutual problems. An on-site Residential Manager will oversee the physical building, collect rents, and handle residents’ tenant needs.

The two apartment complexes will be located on the same lot, and will share an outdoor covered area and community room which will allow residents to participate in activities together and establish a sense of community.

Construction for Bay Apartments II is projected to be completed in the Spring of 2010.

TREATMENT TEAM MEETING SUCCESS

Each month ColumbiaCare Services' facilities have Treatment Team Meetings which serve as an opportunity to review the client's progress both in the residential program as well as in their mental health treatment plan. Hazel Barrett, Administrator at Fieldstone, has been noticed for her very effective Treatment Team Meetings, and so we would like to showcase the process of her meetings.

Treatment Team Meetings at Fieldstone consist of: the client, any family member/guardian the client desires to have in attendance; Dr. Welch, the facility Psychiatrist; John Kerr, Clackamas County representative, QMHA staff if possible; the Resident's Advocate; a Supported Employment Representative if applicable; and the Administrator/Therapist.

The meetings last approximately 30 minutes, and Hazel begins by allowing the resident to share about the past month. The Therapist is able to help prompt the resident, if needed, with reminders of positive areas as well as issues that may need some work. The Advocate is then given time to address items on the Residential Service Plan and the participation of the resident in the milieu and skill building groups.

After this has been explored, other members of the team are given the opportunity to speak of their involvement or observations regarding the client. Dependent upon the resident's progress and goals, discussion of discharge may be addressed. Dr. Welch will conclude the meeting with a summary of the resident's progress and discuss any medication changes that are recommended before having the Residential Service Plan signed by the resident, and guardian if required.

Keep up the good work Hazel!

ITS TIME FOR THAT HOLIDAY CHEER!

Many of our facilities have been actively seeking the holiday spirit and enjoying the festivities of the season. All were able to start things off right with a grand Thanksgiving feast, where each facility was able to cook up the good stuff...trimmings and all! Many reports have said that those who partook were happy to enjoy a delicious meal with those around.



A special report came from Fairview Firs regarding their big family meal, this year held the Saturday prior to Thanksgiving. This was the third consecutive year for the meal to take place, and seems it might become a lasting tradition. Lou Brothers, Facility Administrator, said the families of the clients are beginning to anticipate the dinner and even make

a special effort to come. He stated that each family is getting to know one another on a more personal level, allowing for an atmosphere of comfort and familiarity to be enjoyed. Lou also added that some of the staff are pretty talented cooks and are able to create a tasty traditional Thanksgiving dinner!

But Thanksgiving was only the beginning for the festival activities! Many facilities began decorating for Christmas and reported plans of gingerbread house making, Christmas light viewing, and much more! Willamette Rose will even be having a special Christmas Eve event for all the Portland area facilities. They will enjoy tea, wassail crafts and caroling... oh the fun to be had!

ASIST TRAINING GOES ABROAD!



Gary McConahay (center front)

In September of this year our very own Gary McConahay was able to demonstrate his knowledge in suicide prevention when he was invited to a conference in Seoul, South Korea to share his ASIST Training. He received this invitation to be a keynote speaker as part of the effort to help bring awareness to the nation's growing issue of suicide. The conference was held in concurrence to the World Suicide Prevention day, and was sponsored by the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs.

Congratulations Gary on having the first ever Korean ASIST Training!

GOODWILL TO ALL

Employees and residents at ColumbiaCare happily pulled out their trusty knitting needles and went to work for our annual Scarf Project. This year participants made a collective total of 75 scarves. But the knitting didn't stop there as hats, wrist warmers, mittens and even blankets were made!

Some facilities did particularly well in contributing to this good cause (thank you Fieldstone and Driftwood), other facilities, such as Columbia Rose, decided to put their efforts elsewhere. Facility Administrator Max Horn reported that there was unanimous decision by residents to help serve those in need by helping prepare a meal at one of the low-income meal programs in Portland.

Regardless of the type of service offered by staff and residents, goodwill like this is encouraging and very much appreciated by those who need it.

Supported Employment Success Story

As the Supported Employment program here at ColumbiaCare continues to grow, the amount of success stories do as well. One positive story that was recently shared with the Administrative Office comes from a client who has worked the past two seasons at Jerry's Rogue Jets as a boat dock worker. This position requires him to securely tie up boats when they come in, clean and check life jackets to ensure they are ready prior to each trip, and swab the deck and passenger areas of the boats.

Scott McNair, the manager at Jerry's Rogue Jets, related that it has been a pleasure to have this individual working for them as they know he will not only work hard, but do a good job as well. This worker's direct supervisor, Jeff Ferguson, stated that he is appreciated by all of the boat drivers and has even served as a leader to younger workers.

This client does experience difficult days, but fortunately he has been able to communicate with his manager during these times. He finds them to be very flexible and allow for shift changes if needed. Having this communication and being able to adjust his schedule have greatly contributed to his successful completion of both seasons.

Elaine Lortscher, Supported Employment Specialist, said that she has enjoyed providing support for this individual, such as talking over situations and even working beside him to make suggestions and confirm his ability. She states that he truly is a successful worker as she has seen him take complete responsibility for managing his schedule and any work issues that have occurred.

EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

We would like to recognize those exceptional employees who have continually performed above and beyond the standard at work. They have displayed true dedication, motivation and passion which has been recognized by their coworkers, Facility Administrators, as well as employees in the Administrative Office

Cedar Bay ~ Melissa Boyd

Columbia River Ranch ~ Letisia Gonzalez

Columbia Rose ~ Eric Cason

Coos Crisis Resolution Center ~ Dina Wilkerson

Creekside ~ Teresa Hunsaker

Driftwood Lodge ~ Cindy Bigelow

Fairview Firs ~ JoAnne Steinhauer

Fieldstone ~ Sterling Snowden

Mossy Meadows ~ Ashley Aldern & Crystal Stachera

Rosebud ~ Jon Morgan

Willamette Rose ~ Meghan Kroes

THANK YOU!

Written by Jenna Bilden