

TI Opens New Home, Welcomes New Consumers

Our Mission:

The mission of Toward Independence, Inc. is to assist people with developmental disabilities to live the fullest life possible by providing individualized services in a variety of community settings.

Our Vision:

Individuals with disabilities moving toward independence as they live their lives to the fullest.



July 14 was an exciting day for everyone at Toward Independence, Inc. (TI), but more importantly, it



Walnut Ridge Consumers Megan Whitaker and Amber Howland tackle Wal-Mart.

was a thrilling day for consumers Amber Howland and Megan Whitaker who took the giant step of living independently as they moved into their first residence on Walnut Ridge Ct. in Dayton, OH.

For Megan this move meant moving from a living arrangement where she shared a small room with someone else, to moving into a home with her own bedroom. As soon as Montgomery County Program Director Polly Angel had the keys to the home, she began moving Megan's belongings from her small living quarters to her new home.

(see New Home page 5)

A Note from the Executive Director: New and Exciting Opportunities Abound for TI



Mark Schlater

Where did the summer go? Summer is winding down, but at Toward Independence, Inc. we are winding up with lots of new opportunities, new services and programs for individuals we are serving. Yes, this has been a busy summer and we can take pride in our efforts and our accomplishments.

Our mission at TI is to assist individuals with developmental disabilities to live the fullest life possible by providing

individualized services in a variety of community settings. With those thoughts in mind, we are happy to announce that this summer we were selected as the provider for two new Montgomery County homes; one home has already opened and the other home is slated to open at the end of

September. In addition to new services in Montgomery County, we are also expanding our Adult Day Habilitation Program (Creative Community Connections) into Clark County. Toward Independence, Inc. of Clark County will open their new office effectively October 1, 2014. This new office will be the center hub for our Adult Day Habilitation services as well as the office to coordinate potential new residential services opportunities in Clark County.

During my first year at TI, I have had the pleasure of meeting many great employees truly dedicated to our agency mission and its values. This first year allowed me to assess the strengths of our organization and also introduce new processes and procedures to improve internal operating systems. My goal is to provide the best possible opportunities and working environment for each of our employees. Without question, TI's reputation is measured by the relationship and services performed by our direct care professionals (DSPs) each day. We need to provide all employees with the opportunities for professional

(see page 2, New and Exciting Opportunities)

New and Exciting Opportunities for TI

(continued from page 1)

development to ensure their skills and abilities are the best they can be! To make sure we have the best qualified and trained employees I have initiated Professional Development opportunities for our employees and will make this a priority going into 2015.

I believe TI has many new opportunities for growth and expansion in the upcoming years. With our employee's assistance, I am committed to creating new and exciting opportunities for the individuals we currently serve as well as those we have the honor to serve in the future.

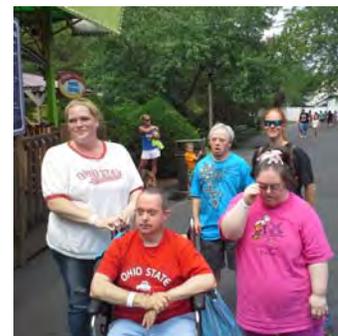
Best regards,



Mark

CCC Takes On Coney Island

Participants in Creative Community Connections (CCC) recently spent the day showing their thrill-seeking side as they conquered the rides and attractions at Coney Island Amusement Park in Cincinnati. From the Dodgems to the Tilt-A-Whirl, staff and consumers enjoyed a day of rides and good food.



TI Starts Video Training Pilot Program



TI is committed to assisting people with developmental disabilities live the fullest life possible. One way we can make this

happen is by ensuring our employees feel knowledgeable and adequately trained to care for our consumers. TI Executive Director Mark Schlater believes video training could be one of the answers to address this need.

In a pilot program started this August, TI began creating videos of the proper ways to care for one of our consumers who requires 100% care and has some very specific needs. For a new employee, remembering everything that is required to keep this consumer safe and comfortable can be a daunting task.

The videos are broken into segments by topics. The segments will cover topics like bathing, proper administration of medication, and use of a lift, to name just a few.

The videos are being narrated and demonstrated by an employee who has cared for this individual for more than nine years. He demonstrates the correct techniques and peppers in advice and reassurance to help less seasoned caregivers feel more confident in their ability to care for the consumer.

After the successful completion of the recording process, which is anticipated to take one to two hours a week for eight weeks, the management team will work to identify other consumers whose caregivers may benefit from video training.

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Brighter Tomorrow Foundation Provides Important Grant

Residents of the Trailside home in Montgomery County are enjoying the comfort and safety of a new full-sized Ford F250 handicap-accessible van with a wheelchair lift thanks in part to a generous \$10,000 grant from the Brighter Tomorrow Foundation.

“Toward Independence, Inc. will continue to seek every opportunity necessary to ensure consumers served by TI have the opportunity to enjoy their life to the fullest,” says Executive Director Mark Schlater.

TI applied for a grant through The Brighter Tomorrow Foundation to purchase a new handicap-accessible vehicle for the Trailside Home. This grant, properly named “Brighter Tomorrow” will now allow these consumers to have a brighter tomorrow as they travel in style. This vehicle provides the individuals living in the Trailside home the opportunity to travel safely within the community and to participate in activities, social events and run necessary everyday errands.

We are very grateful to The Brighter Tomorrow Foundation.



Trailside resident Claude Martin gives the new van, which was funded in part by a generous grant from The Better Tomorrow Foundation, a thumbs-up!

Through their generous support, a significant difference has been made in the lives of the individuals who live in the Trailside home.

Creative Community Connections Expands to Clark County



Toward Independence is pleased to announce the expansion of its adult day habilitation program, Creative Community Connections (CCC) and Residential Services into Clark County this fall.

“We look forward to the opportunity to expand our services and offer our assistance in providing new exciting opportunities with Day Habilitation and residential support in Clark County,” says Toward Independence Executive Director Mark Schlater.

Since its beginning in Xenia in 2007, CCC of Greene County has grown in program offerings and the number of consumers served. CCC of Clark County will offer the same programs available in Greene County, and they include:

Creative Xpressions - a program that meets Monday

through Thursdays and encourages self-expression in a fun social atmosphere.

On the Move - is a program for those individuals who enjoy being physically active. The program meets Monday - Thursday and will be held at the Springfield YMCA.

GO (Getting Out) program - this program teaches community integration and social skills through experiential learning. Go Group will be available from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Fridays and takes place in the community with a different field trip each week.

“Toward Independence Inc. has a proud history of providing high quality services and opportunities to individuals with developmental disabilities, we know we can provide creative choices and make a positive impact on the lives of individuals living in Clark County,” says Mark.

The new location is scheduled to open October 1, 2014 and will be located at 1720 Valley Loop Rd., Springfield, OH . An Open House/Ribbon Cutting Ceremony is planned for October 23, from 3 p.m.— 6 p.m.

TI Executive Director Puts a DD Spin On the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge

In August the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge dominated social media. It didn't take long for TI staff members to find themselves nominated to take part. Executive Director Mark Schlater was challenged by a member of the TI staff. He took the challenge and recognized the importance of bringing awareness to this terrible disease, but Mark also had an important challenge of his own for the state of Ohio. Mark's message was intended to bring awareness to the need for funding for caregivers who work in the field of Developmental Disabilities.

"Our staff at Toward Independence, Inc. do a wonderful job in their everyday efforts to ensure our consumers receive the best possible care and services; however, there needs to be more funding to reduce turnover (30-40% state average) and to attract more staff wanting to work in the field of developmental disabilities," he noted.

Mark was cheered on by the participants of TI's Adult Day Habilitation Program, Creative Community Connections (CCC).



Mark was cheered on for the Ice Bucket Challenge by the participants of TI's Adult Day Habilitation Program, Creative Community Connections (CCC).

Beth Esterkamp Joins TI as Marketing & Development Coordinator



Beth Esterkamp joined TI on June 16 as the Marketing and Development Coordinator. Beth is assuming the role of longtime TI Development Officer Jodi Hill who will be devoting her time and energy to motherhood on a full-time basis.

Beth comes to TI with over 15 years of experience in corporate communications and marketing.

She has extensive experience in email marketing. While she said she has enjoyed the path her career has taken her over the years, she is excited about the opportunity to make a difference at Toward Independence.

"I'm excited to come to work every day and know the organization I am working for has an immediate and powerful impact on the lives of the individuals we assist," says Beth.

During her first couple of months on the job, Beth has been learning more about TI and the mission of our organization

and assessing areas that she would like to see grow. Beth is passionate about digital marketing and looks forward to helping TI develop and grow the areas of email marketing/communications, website and intranet design and possibly social media. While these areas are very important, she says she is more excited to get to know our consumers, staff and family members.

"The most fulfilling day for me so far at TI was the day Amber and Megan moved into Walnut Ridge. I was able to go and see the house as the ladies moved in. And, I had the opportunity to go with them on their shopping trip to Wal-Mart. Moving into your own apartment or house for the first time is a thrilling experience. Being a part of their move-in day and seeing all the pre-work that went into getting the home ready, reaffirmed that TI is the place for me," says Beth.

Beth is looking forward to meeting as many people as possible. Please feel free to email or call her with ideas or suggestions, or just to say hi. Beth's email is beth-esterkamp@ti-inc.org.

New Home

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For Amber's parents, independence is something they had hoped their daughter would someday enjoy. Amber embraced the idea of moving from her parents' home to live independently. In the days leading up to her move, she posted a daily countdown on her Facebook page, her dad, Tom Howland said.

The anticipation at TI surrounding the opening of the Walnut Ridge home began when we were selected as one of the potential service providers. After interviewing several agencies, the ladies and their families selected TI. The following weeks were filled with Individualized Service Plan (ISP) meetings, a tour of the home, shopping for furniture and staff training.

Polly, with help from Walnut Ridge Home Supervisor Sheba Boyd, spent countless hours during the weeks and weekends leading up to the move-in date purchasing, assembling and delivering the home goods, appliances and furniture the women selected to the new home. On the Friday before the move-in, training was held at the home. After the training was complete, several staff members stayed to help organize the kitchen and rearrange the living room furniture.

When move-in day finally arrived, Amber and Megan— with the help of family and friends— had fun unpacking boxes, hanging curtains and pictures and getting settled in. After they unloaded their belongings, it was time for a trip to Wal-Mart to stock their kitchen and bathrooms. The shopping



Pictured Left to Right: Montgomery County Program Director, Polly Angel, TI Consumers Megan Whitaker, Amber Howland and Walnut Ridge Home Supervisor Sheba Boyd enjoy some down time after a busy day of unpacking.

caravan included Amber and Megan, Polly and Sheba and Amber's parents, Tom and Terry Howland.

The women excitedly discussed which items they needed. Amber was eager to pick up some kitchen items since she recently learned to cook and has many new recipes to try. Megan enjoyed picking out rugs and dish towels to brighten up her new home.

Best Wishes to Amelia Shaub



In a potluck luncheon held at the TI main office, staff and consumers celebrated Amelia Shaub's 23-year with TI and wished her well as she officially retired on August 30.

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INSIGHT

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CCC Fall Schedule

Cincinnati Reds Game

Sunday September 7, 1:10 p.m., Great American Ball Park

Farewell to Summer Festival

Saturday, September 13

Art Classes with Found Objects

Wednesdays, Sept. 3 through Sept. 24

Disney on Ice

Saturday, October 25

Fall Costume Party

Friday, October 31

Holiday Performance

Saturday, December 20, 2:00 p.m.

Art Museum Tour and Lunch

Sept. 26 and Oct. 24, 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Cincinnati Museum of Art

For more information or to register for any of the events/activities listed above, contact Nancy Justice, CCC Program Coordinator, at (937) 376-3996 or nancy-justice@ti-inc.org.