



**"The People Company"**

Serving Persons with Special Needs Since 1998

# The Connector

*Choice ~ Respect ~ Participation ~ Presence*

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## In this Issue:

### Focus On Strengths

pg 1, 2

### One Extremely Special Day

pg 2, 3

### Someone You Should Know

pg 2, 3

### ASI Monthly Elective Education

pg 3

## From the Director's Desk ~

*As we reflect on the recent tragedy in Omaha we must consider how disconnected that young man was. Support networks play a huge role in our lives and in this case the support required to work through a personal crisis was not present or at least perceived to not be present. I am sure we all thought of our loved ones as the news of this event unfolded. Connections and relationships are the things that get us through tough times. Forming them is not always easy but we all have been able to do so.*

*We at AmeriServe International do send our condolences and prayers to those affected by the events of this past Wednesday. Creating Connections with purpose and value for those with significant challenges is what makes the difference in the quality of the lives of those with whom we have the great fortune to be associated with*

*Best wishes and Happy Holiday from "The People Company"*

**Tom Hoff**

## AmeriServe International, Inc.

Making life better tomorrow because of what is done today.

## Focus On Strengths

Recently a business management article titled "Focus on Strengths" came across my desk. In the article the author spoke about how the positive energy of a team can be increased by focusing on the strengths of team members instead of on their weaknesses. It was suggested that the strengths of each team member be identified, followed by looking for ways for team members to spend more time in their areas of strength and less time in their areas of weakness.

*Spend more time in their areas of strength and less time in their areas of weakness.* Sounds like a good idea. Wouldn't we all love to spend more time working in our areas of strength rather than our

areas of weakness? As I thought about the concept of focusing on strengths it brought to mind the manner in which we help those people we support spend more time in their areas of strength.

Part of the admissions process involves the assessment of the person's strengths and needs using an assessment tool developed by ASI called the Personal Network Plan. One of the purposes of the Personal Network Plan is to identify the person's strengths and needs as it relates to participation in various sectors of the community. From the identified strengths and needs of the individual, the Team begins the process of developing goals and programs to address those needs and turn them into



strengths, while at the same time using the person's strengths to form connections in the various sectors of the community.

The concept of community sectors has been identified as a critical foundation piece for the development of programs for the people we serve. Community sectors are five sectors of community life in which people actively participate, which have been identified as Government and Education, Vocational and Work, Service and Life,

*Continued on Page 2*

## What We Do

### Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)

Habilitation, Respite, Consumer Directed Attendant Care, Group homes

### Day Treatment

Adult Day Habilitation and Community Integration Services

### Residential Support

Supported Community Living, Specialized Living Arrangements

## Focus On Strengths (Cont'd)

Recreation and Leisure, and Home and Family.

When people with disabilities are given the opportunity to increase their skill level and level of

participation in each of the community sectors, the quality of his/her life changes from one of isolation and dependence to one of connectedness and interdependence. The mindset of focusing on a person's

strengths is a powerful one, and creates opportunity for the people we serve to assume valued roles of respect, presence and participation in the community in which they live.

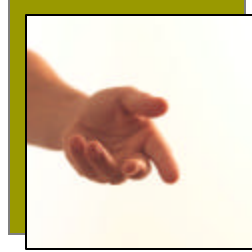
## One Extremely Special Day

As I sat in my chair to begin an article for the newsletter, the telephone rang. The caller on the other end of the telephone said, "This is Darrell, I am in the parking lot beside the day habilitation program and the PT Cruiser has a flat tire; I have two clients with me and we were just headed back to the apartment.

Darrell is an employee who provides service to two clients who live in an apartment with 24-hour support. Both clients had finished the day at The Planning Center and were anxious to return to their apartment. By the time

I arrived at the parking lot, a "Good Samaritan" had already come to the rescue to help Darrell and the clients. A portable pressure pump had the tire inflated well enough for Darrell to drive to the nearest service station.

Once at the station the clients waited for the tire to be repaired. Some time later Darrell telephoned again to say



that the service station needed to be paid as the Company didn't have an account there. So, off I went to the station to pay the bill. Upon arriving at the station, it occurred to me how inter-related we are with each others' actions. For starters, had the "Good Samaritan" not appeared when he did I wouldn't be at the station, and, the station would not be "selling" a new tire. It all happened because of one good deed done by another.

## Someone You Should Know

Every person for whom we provide service is unique and has a life story to share. Just as a quilt is made of many unique pieces of fabric, our Company is made up of many unique people. Today, by way of the interview process, we'd like to introduce you to Billy, a gentleman who receives day habilitation and supported living services through AmeriServe International.

**Interviewer:** Where did you live prior to coming to Council Bluffs and AmeriServe International?

**Billy:** I lived in Des Moines.

**Interviewer:** What do you like best about your home here?

**Billy:** I like my friends and it's nice. I am more independent here than ever before. I enjoy cooking and doing my laundry.

**Interviewer:** What activities do you like to participate in?

**Billy:** Go to the YMCA, play basketball, and listen to R & B music. I also like to watch sports and shop.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any hobbies? What are they?

**Billy:** I collect baseball, NBA and football cards.

**Interviewer:** What are your goals for the future?

**Billy:** To live with my family, to get a job and be healthy.

**Interviewer:** What skills are you working on to help you achieve your goals?

**Billy:** Being on time; make sure I attend TPC when I'm scheduled; being cooperative with my peers and sharing.

**Interviewer:** What do you like most about The Planning Center?

**Billy:** Socializing with my peers. I like the activities.

**Interviewer:** What do you learn at TPC?

**Billy:** I learn how to express my feelings and resolve my problems. I also learn how to stay on task and be on time.

**Interviewer:** What are some of the highlights of your life that you'd like to share?

**Billy:** 1). I was interviewed by Channel 8 News when I was a senior in high school because I won the Hot Shot Basketball contest. 2) I participated in the 1995 Special Olympics World Games. Editor's

Continued on Page 3

See Sign-up sheet  
at your work location.

## ASI Monthly Elective Education

Training provided by  
American Institute of Management.

### A Day in the Life...

**Tuesday, December 4th 12:00 - 3:00pm**  
**Tuesday, December 18th 3:30 - 6:30pm**

#### Attend the session to:

- Identify how your personal values are demonstrated through your daily actions
- Create an awareness of how you impose your values on others
- Demonstrate the true meaning of respect to others you serve

#### Special Event:

## JEOPARDY!

How well do you know the questions?

### Preventing Harassment in the Workplace

**Friday, January 18 12:00-3:00pm**  
**Thursday, January 24 3:30-6:30pm**

A hostile work environment may be illegal, but it also can be a symptom of a much larger problem -- lack of respect in the workplace. This program starts with the minimum requirements of the law, and AmeriServe International policy and procedure prohibiting harassment on the basis of sex, race, age, religion, national orientation, disability and sexual orientation. Going beyond the minimum, we discuss AmeriServe's values, as well as the values of the participants, to establish a respectful workplace.

#### Attend the session to:

- Create a common understanding of what constitutes harassment
- Focus on methods to prevent hostile conditions
- Review the AmeriServe policy and procedure regarding harassment
- Discuss how to handle potential harassment
- Demonstrate leadership behaviors that focus on a safe work environment for ourselves and our clients

## Someone You Should Know (Cont'd)

note: That's pretty cool, don't you think? I have participated in Special Olympics basketball, baseball, volleyball and track and field and have broken school records.

**Interviewer:** What's on your Christmas list?

**Billy:** CDs, Game Cube and clothes.

As you can see, Billy is truly a unique individual with many interests and talents. His accomplishments to date are impressive! We are privileged to have the opportunity to help Billy achieve the skills and tools he needs to help him fulfill his life dreams.

## Support Options

1. In-home Support—training to increase self-help, socialization, and adaptive skills within the home and community.
2. Day Treatment—specialized sensory-motor, cognitive, communicative, social, interaction and behavioral support.
3. Residential—designed to maximize consumer successes through the use of habilitative therapies, special developmental skills, participative enhancement, and sensory-motor development in the group home or specialized living setting.

**Call for more information today!**

**AmeriServe  
International, Inc.  
712-322-0272**



## AmeriServe International, Inc.

300 W. Broadway, Suite 20  
Council Bluffs, IA. 51503

Website: [www.ameriserveintl.com](http://www.ameriserveintl.com)

### How to Contact Us



#### By Phone

(712) 322-0272  
8am -5pm  
Mon-Fri



#### By Mail

AmeriServe  
International, Inc.  
300 W. Broadway,  
Suite 20  
Council Bluffs, IA.  
51503



#### By FAX

(712) 322-1411  
24 hours



#### By EMAIL

thoff@  
ameriserveintl.com



### Making a Difference

AmeriServe International, Inc. carefully selects all personnel to ensure that they possess beliefs, experiences, skills, and knowledge that will assist persons with special needs in exercising a quality of life of their choice. If you or someone you know is interested in doing the right things, in the right way, for the right reasons, at the right times, we are looking for the right people.

Please call **712-322-0272** to find out how you can make a difference.



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of  
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