



The Connector

SEPTEMBER 2009

I O W A

**SERVING
PERSONS WITH
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES
SINCE 1998**

IN THIS ISSUE:

Meeting Individual Needs at the Planning Center	1
From the Director's Desk	2
ASI Continuing Education Options	2
Ben, Dustin, & Terrance Explore Indoor Recreational Opportunities	2
What to do About the Flu?	3
Employee Spotlight: Dan Reed, CSC	3

Meeting Individual Needs at the Planning Center

Meeting the individual needs of each person is a key element to the success of persons served at the AmeriServe International Planning Center. Achieving this objective requires ongoing adaptations to each person's environment. Several positive changes have been made at The Planning Center this year, including restructuring the classrooms in early January. The reorganization of each instructional area was based on each person's functioning level and their areas of interest, as well as the strengths of staff members.

Going through this process, we realized that the needs of two of our young men were quite different from the needs of others being served in our program. We



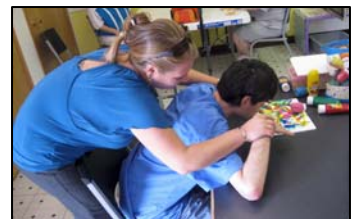
Michael gets some special attention from Matt, a McDonald's employee.

were determined to find a way to better serve the needs of Michael and Justin. Planning Center staff brainstormed ideas and came up with a way to integrate these young men into the community, as well as providing additional habilitation in the classroom. Brainstorming ideas included making better use of our building space by creating a new classroom. After presenting the idea to members of the Leadership team and gaining approval for the expenditures our talented craftsman, Dana, made it happen for us. A new classroom space was built in late July and a classroom teacher was hired to work one-on-one with Michael and Justin.

Safety equipment was purchased and a schedule was created to incorporate the two men into activities with other classrooms. Some of the community activities include going to the park, attending movies and the café, shopping at Wal-Mart, and taking nature walks. As well as going into the community, Michael and Justin participate with staff one-on-one in activities

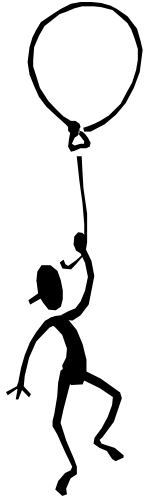
which include music and dance, matching and sorting object and colors, and various art projects. They also work on hand/eye coordination and staying on task by playing games such as bowling, tic-tac-toe toss and bean bag toss.

Making environmental changes and closely examining the way we do things have made a big difference in the lives of Michael and Justin. Meeting the needs of each individual is a hallmark of the way things are done at AmeriServe International.



Justin receives assistance to create a one-of-a-kind painting.

From the Director's Desk



We are all interested in becoming a more complete person. We attend all sorts of activities for purpose and pleasure. At these activities, we find out who we are and develop relationships that grow. As we grow in experience and relationships, we become happier.

Each of us has differing ideas of what is

purposeful and what makes us happy. As individuals, we seek to find and experience things that give us purpose and make us happy. That is why we work and play.

In this issue, you will see that gaining a life of purpose and pleasure is a key focus of AmeriServe International. Providing opportunities for gaining relationships and

experience that lead to purpose and pleasure is at the core of our planning and supporting processes. We work very hard to give the opportunity for each person we serve and employ to grow and have a purposeful and pleasurable experience with us. This is why we are "The People Company."

*Tom Hoff,
Director of Marketing &
Business Development*

AmeriServe International Continuing Education Options

The History and Future of Client Services

Friday, September 18th—12:00-2:00pm
Thursday, September 24th—3:30-5:30pm

A review of the history of treatment and service of persons with disabilities can help us to better understand what types of options are needed to create choice, respect, presence, and participation. Join us to watch and discuss historic perspectives and paradigms and create a better tomorrow because of what we do today.

- Review how people with disabilities were treated throughout history
- Discussion of Client Rights
- Supporting People as People
- Explore the importance of linking today's discussion with every actions at AmeriServe

Positive Teaching Techniques (subject to change)

Friday, October 16th—12:00-2:00pm
Thursday, October 22nd—3:30-5:30pm

This session focuses again on the skills needed to reward, refine, and shape behavior to enhance personal satisfaction, and home and community interaction. Practical, hands-on instruction will reinforce the concepts behind the learning, making the results useful immediately after the conference.

- State four values of positive teaching and positive behavior support
- Understand how your attitudes and values shape the nature of your interactions with persons you support
- Demonstrate understanding of the Ignore/Interrupt; Redirect; Reward process

Ben, Dustin and Terrance Explore Indoor Recreational Opportunities!

The three young men who share a home on the north side of Council Bluffs enjoy being active in the evenings. The weather for outdoor activity is changing so they are looking more at indoor opportunities, and there are plenty of indoor recreational activities available!

The Parks and Recreation Department for the City of Omaha offers a program called Therapeutic Recreation and Inclusion Services. What this means for the three young men, Ben, Dustin, and Terrance, is indoor sports. Tuesday nights is Water Exercise. This fun activity is at an indoor pool in Omaha. There are volunteer staff

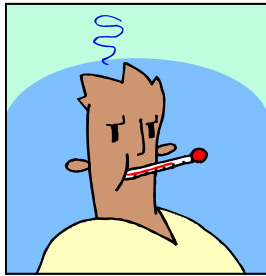
and lots of them. Each person participating has one volunteer assigned to him or her. It is once a week and the cost is \$7.00 per month, a great bargain!

The same organization also offers weight lifting, but Dustin is the only person who has elected to participate in that activity. These are great activities, plus they offer holiday

parties, dances, and other fun.

The three young men also elected to participate at the Ollie Webb Center in the Basketball League for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities. They attend each Monday and have great fun. They promised to bring some pictures for the next newsletter!

What to do About the Flu?



Following the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control, consumers and staff at AmeriServe have been encouraged to follow safe health practices

during this flu season. Through our partnership with Alegent Occupational Health in Council Bluffs, we will be sponsoring a clinic to employees so they can receive seasonal flu shots at our office if they so desire. Consumers and their staff advocates will be talking with their personal physicians to get their recommendation about getting the seasonal flu shot as well as the vaccination for H1N1 flu

when it becomes available.

In the meantime, common sense seems to be the theme. Maintain a healthy lifestyle through rest, diet, exercise and relaxation. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose. Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes – germs spread this way. And, one of the most important steps to

follow: Don't spread the flu! If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home.

For the most up-to-date information about seasonal and H1N1 flu, visit www.flu.gov. Here's wishing you good health in the months ahead.



Employee Spotlight: Dan Reed, CSC

Meet Client Services Coordinator Dan Reed. Dan came to AmeriServe International with 15 years experience working with people with developmental disabilities

and mental retardation. Dan's previous experiences in providing direct care, serving as a Vocational Manager and Residential Director allowed him to gain a broad range of knowledge, skills and abilities. We were anxious to put that knowledge to use for people we serve when he applied for work at ASI in April, 2008.

Citing "working my direct hours with consumers" as the thing he likes best about his current position, Dan clearly enjoys the people for which he provides support. During

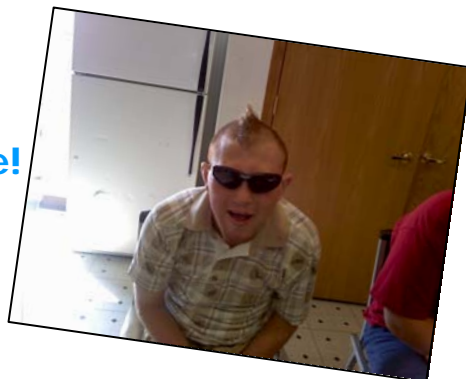
his tenure at ASI Dan has worked residential direct care, as a classroom instructor at the Planning Center and currently as Client Services Coordinator for Rob, Rich and Justin's home. Dan has proven himself to be a great team player, too, as he has frequently answered the call if substitute coverage is needed at the Planning Center.

When asked about hobbies and interests outside of work, Dan had a long and varied list of interests including fishing, politics, church, watching Iowa football, playing

chess, history, and listening to Latin and classical music! Dan is also currently enrolled in college, working to complete his Bachelor's Degree.

Finally, it has been the practice of this interviewer to ask this question to those being interviewed: "Is there anything people might be surprised to know about you?" Dan provided an intriguing reply, "When I was 12 I used to box and boxed in the Lincoln penitentiary!" Readers – please feel free to contact Dan to find out more information about his surprising revelation!

Terrance enjoys the choice of a new hairstyle! Cool, man!



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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What We Do

Residential Support

Supported
Community
Living, Specialized
Living Arrangements

Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)

Habilitation, Respite,
Consumer Directed
Attendant Care,
Group Homes

Day Treatment

Adult Day
Habilitation
And Community
Integration Services

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, communication, 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.



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