

A Message from Chief Executive Officer, Dale Morrissey...

In the last couple of issues of *DSCCommunity News* we have felt it was important to talk about the state budget situation, and it is always our hope that by July we are communicating decisions; however, there is no budget. We want to share with you what we know as it directly relates to DSC.

As of July 1st there is still no budget in place for the state of Illinois which means there is a great deal up in the air and changing daily. Through our state association, Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (IARF), and other statewide organizations, information on the impact of the lack of a state budget is being given to state lawmakers on a regular basis so they are aware of the hardships that are being created. It is difficult to share detailed information, as it is changing so quickly, but we assure you that DSC's board and management team are working diligently through this process.

DSC and Community Elements were contacted by IARF in late June and asked to be a venue for a press conference that was held on June 29th at DSC. This request was initiated from groups in Springfield that organized to help share the realities of how lives would be affected after July 1st when these programs are suspended or eliminated. While DSC and Community Elements had individuals speak at the press conference, there were also other groups represented, such as those receiving services from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and Nurses Association.

As always, we will continue to advocate on behalf of all people with disabilities receiving DSC services at the local and state levels. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Until next time...

Dale

Sometimes, people just need a little extra help in order to help themselves.

This is true of many consumers at DSC and certainly true of Debbie, who has intellectual disabilities and a few health problems, including diabetes and arthritis. Debbie first began receiving services from DSC in 1991, receiving only Case Management Services. Her Case Manager, Lori, provided assistance with referrals, treatment monitoring and follow up, and advocacy among other things. While these services proved useful, Lori soon realized that Debbie was not living to her highest possible level of health and independence. Specifically, Debbie had some trouble in the areas of work motivation, personal care, and apartment keeping. To get more support, Debbie began to receive Apartment Services in 2012, and was able to develop and maintain skills necessary to successfully live independently in the community. The difference has been incredible! With the added help of Debbie's Apartment Services Case Manager, she was able to make positive changes to her living habits, which have resulted in a higher overall quality of life, as well as an increased amount of independence. Debbie now has an increased level of work motivation, is able to keep up with taking her medications on her own, takes pride in her appearance, and even looks for opportunities to exercise! Way to go, Debbie!



Employment First

Employment First is modeled from a national movement that deems employment in the general workforce as the first and preferred option when exploring goals and a life path for people with disabilities.

In February 2015, DSC submitted a grant request to the Champaign County Developmental Disabilities Board in collaboration with Community Choices, a local cooperative, to make Employment First a priority to our community. We are very excited that this grant request was recently funded for FY16 which began formally on July 1st. The focus of this grant is to develop the infrastructure to support Employment First for Champaign County.

Areas of focus over the next 12 – 24 months will include: Individual and Family educational/informational events; Staff training/consultation to facilitate a quicker shift in culture for increased community and employment focused outcomes; Business/Employer outreach; and efforts to influence System Reform at the state level.

Stay tuned for future updates about Employment First!

Caregiver Connections at DSC

A home child care provider in Homer was concerned about the excessive tantrums that Harry, age 2, has when his mother leaves each day. He cries inconsolably each morning. The provider is unsure how to handle his behavior and the disruption to the other children in her care. Fortunately, she is able to contact ***Caregiver Connections*** to help her understand why Harry may be reacting this way, how to manage his behavior, and work with Harry's mother to ease this transition.

DSC recently became the recipient of the Caregiver Connections grant, administered by the Department of Human Services. We employ one Caregiver Connections Consultant to serve approximately 630 child care centers and day care homes in Iroquois, Champaign, Vermilion, Macon, Piatt, and Douglas counties. For providers in both centers and homes, children with challenging behaviors can be a major source of stress and may lead to expulsion.

This unique program helps child care providers recognize, understand, and respond to the social emotional needs of children in their care. The mission is to promote the social emotional health of young children and families by strengthening the knowledge and competencies of early childhood teachers and caregivers. Research shows a clear relationship between a child's healthy social emotional development, success in childcare, and later success in school.

The Caregiver Connections Consultant collaborates with DSC staff and local and regional agencies: To strengthen skills to support a child's healthy social emotional development; To offer support in the development of partnerships between providers and parents; To help with problem-solving and working with parents on difficult issues; To provide timely, helpful training; To refer families to other services when needed.



Movie Premiere was a Huge Success!

DSC's Prompting Theater, the local CU theater troupe comprised of adult actors with developmental and intellectual disabilities, premiered their first movie, "Who Stole My Hoo-to Foo-to Boo-to Bah?" on Tuesday, April 21st at the Art Theater Co-op in downtown Champaign. Over 200 people attended this red carpet event (pictured at right)! The actors arrived in style, wearing red carpet formal wear, and riding in a limo. Lines formed to get autographs and pictures from the stars!



Other showings throughout that week were at SoDo Theater in Champaign, with over 600 people in total viewing the movie. Based on a songbook by Dr. Seuss, "Who Stole My Hoo-to Foo-to Boo-to Bah?" was a result of the creativity of the actors and writers. After creating an original stage play in 2013, the Prompting Theater decided to transform that script into a screenplay rewriting it for the big screen. The actors took on this new challenge with amazing dedication, and studied acting for film for six months! The filmmaking experience was integrative and collaborative, with everyone –talent and crew - interacting as the professionals they are.



Amrei Hubler poses with her parents at the premiere.

Set at a triple birthday party, young Simon Spingle Spungle Sporn discovers his "favorite of favorites," his Hoo-to Foo-to Boo-to Bah has been stolen. Setting out to find the culprit, Simon and his detective friend Waldo interrogate the wacky guests at the party, any of which could have committed the serious offense, from the eternally sneezing sister, to the always eating uncle, and many others.

This movie further solidifies the motto of the group, that ***they demonstrate that a disability doesn't imply an inability.***

Health Fair hosted by Consumers!

Participants in two groups at DSC collaborated to host a health fair! Members of the Diabetes Group, "Learning is Sweet" and "Health Matters" worked together to plan and present information at the health fair in April. Approximately 35 people came through the fair, which was run by 11 consumer volunteers and two staff. Many topics were covered, including: *Exercise, Diabetes Risk and Complications, Using my Plate for Healthy Nutrition, Sun Protection, and Proper Hand Washing.*

Everyone enjoyed the event, especially when some of the staff got "Sneezed" on by Sneezzy Sam at the cold & flu station. As a result of a "sugar in your drink" station, there was one staff member who gave up soda completely! The presenters have even expressed interest in taking the health fair to upcoming community events, such as the Down Syndrome Network's Buddy Walk this fall!

*We want to thank the **Women 4 Women** group with Presence Health Hospital for supporting this health fair by providing funding for the materials and supplies!*

DSC Wish List

- * ALL Ultra Free and Clear Detergent
- * Two 8-foot white folding tables
- * Art supplies
- * Food Storage Containers
- * Manual Can Opener
- * Kleenex & paper towels
- * Hygiene products, such as deodorant & toothpaste
- * Snacks for Developmental PLAY Group
- * Bird feeders and bird seed
- * Passes & gift certificates to local vendors & restaurants for community outings
- * Simple board games and puzzles

If you can help with these requests, please contact **Nikki Kopmann** at nkopmann@dsc-illinos.org or by calling (217) 356-9176.

Bequests

To those friends who wish to help assure the longevity of DSC by mentioning DSC in your will, the following general form is suggested: “I give, devise, bequest to Developmental Services Center, an Illinois not-for-profit organization located at 1304 W Bradley Ave., Champaign, IL, the sum of \$____ (or *specifically described property*).”

To view or download a copy of DSC's Planned Giving Opportunities Brochures, please go to this link <http://ow.ly/dIC9w>.

Contact your tax professional for more specific tax information. If you would like more information from DSC, please contact Janice McAteer at jmcateer@dsc-illinos.org or 217.398.7110.

DSC Staff Member Highlights



Kelli Martin, DSC's Training Coordinator, recently celebrated her 15-year anniversary working at DSC! Kelli (pictured at left) started out as an Occupational Therapy Assistant at DSC in 2000 and stayed in that role for ten years before transitioning to Training Coordinator, in charge of teaching training courses for new direct service staff and refresher courses for current staff. This position is a great fit for Kelli since she loves to meet and teach all new employees and volunteers. Three years ago, Kelli was inspired to start a group called *Learning is Sweet* focused on educating consumers who either have, or are at risk for, diabetes. *Learning is Sweet* began with six members and now has about 12 members who meet every other month and learn about diabetes wellness strategies through different visual aids and activities. How sweet is that!

Brian Richter, DSC's Developmental Training Supervisor, has been with DSC for 25 years! After earning his Bachelor's in Business Management from Illinois State University, Brian (pictured at right with some of his family) began working at a DSC group home before transitioning to Developmental Training. Brian finds that working in DT provides a balance between emotional work and structure, which is very fulfilling. In addition to using both sides of his brain, Brian says his favorite part of his job is “the opportunity to challenge assumptions that I am right.” The hard work pays off: In 2008, Brian was named the Direct Service Provider of the Year for the State of Illinois! He is an outstanding advocate for the individuals he serves, with his great sense of humor and his zest for life.



To read more about DSC's fantastic consumers and staff members, stay tuned for our “Meet me on Mondays” feature on our website and Facebook page!

Developmental Services Center
1304 West Bradley Avenue
Champaign, IL 61821

DSC is dedicated to the mission: “To enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities by providing services and supports which enable them to live, work, learn and participate in their communities.”



Rachel Lehman and Her Creative Bunch!

Since working at the Pole Barn last fall, Developmental Instructor, Rachel Lehman, has stimulated many creative minds through various art and craft initiatives. Rachel and a group of consumers have worked extensively with donated materials, from old denim to oven roasted coffee beans, creating murals, tapestries, collages, and mosaics. With such amazing works of art to share, the next challenge was to find locations where it could be displayed for the community to enjoy.



Rachel reached out and is most proud of DSC's partnership with Alliance and Cafe Zojo. Using donated roasted coffee beans, consumers created beautiful artworks (pictured at right) that were displayed at the café in April, some of which were sold and one that is permanently on display at the café for customers to admire! Other completed projects include installations inside DSC's facilities, fabric floral pieces displayed at the disABILITY Expo last October, and a dedication piece for a group member's memorial service.



Rachel has found that engaging in the creative process not only builds the development of skills, such as cutting, color identification, weaving, and hot glue and staple gun use and safety, but also promotes mutual values such as collaboration, patience, resourcefulness, and spontaneity. In the future, Rachel hopes to continue to work with other art groups to foster relationships between artists, to keep honoring family, friends, and community members with beautiful handmade gifts and to use art sale proceeds to purchase high quality art supplies or even a gallery day trip to Chicago!

Thank you, Rachel, for all your hard work and creativity!

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DSC Community News

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What's New Around DSC . . .

Save the date! Saturday, August 1st is C-U in the Prairibbean XI!

The Eastern Illinois Parrot Head Club is holding a benefit concert for DSC from 6:00pm—midnight in the parking lot in front of the Orpheum's Children Museum (Neil and Washington, downtown Champaign)!



This is the event's 11th anniversary and DSC's sixth year as a beneficiary. Last year, the event raised over \$52,000 for DSC! (See all the fun at the pictures on top of this page!) Let's raise even more this year!

Join the fun, with **live music, great food and tropical drinks**, and the **chance to win \$5,000 in a raffle!**

This year, musical guests will be the energetic band “**The Tons O' Fun Band**” and nationally known, award winning tropical rock band “**The Boat Drunks**.” If you're hungry, you can enjoy tasty food from **Chester's BBQ** and **Dragonfire Pizza**, who will be onsite!

And of course, don't forget to bring extra money to bid on some of the great finds at our **silent auction!** Prizes will include gift baskets, Illini memorabilia, rounds of golf, wine baskets, overnight stays and more! Or, you can go home with some great wine from our **wine tree!**

There will truly be something for everyone this year at C-U in the Prairibbean XI! You don't want to miss this event!

You can get raffle and event tickets at www.dsc-illinois.org or DSC's main office, Mon-Fri from 8am—5pm.

Save these other important dates!

Saturday, October 10th

is **C-U Oktoberfest** in Downtown Champaign. Sausages! Beer! Polka! Pretzels! Follow us on Facebook at “C-U Oktoberfest” or go to cuoktoberfest.org.

Saturday, October 17th is the **disABILITY Resource Expo** at Fluid Event Center in Champaign. This is a full-service resource fair with vendors who provide services to individuals with disabilities. More details will be posted at disabilityresourceexpo.org/.



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