



The CHALLENGER

Challenging the community, families and individuals to make a difference
A Publication of the **Darlington County Disabilities and Special Needs Board**
The Lou Scott Center

Winter 2007

Mission: To enhance the lives, develop the abilities, and promote the independence of people with disabilities.

Goodbye 2007! Hello 2008!

We have had a very busy quarter!



On November 16th, we had our annual FAC Hayride at the Scott Center. We had good food and dancing and took turns on the hayride. Mr. John Rogers graciously arranged and led the hayride for us. We had 96 people attend!

On November 20th, we had our Consumer Thanksgiving party at the Lakeview Baptist Church Family Life Center. The Sonoco Men's Club provided entertainment and Mr. B's catered the event.

We had a great time at the Christmas party sponsored by Progress Energy on December 11th. Progress Energy volunteers received gift lists for the consumers and shopped prior to the event. PE volunteers brought along their Ambassadors from North Hartsville Elementary School and the students sang Christmas Carols and helped hand out gifts. The consumers had a great time singing and opening their gifts. After all the gifts were opened, PE volunteers provided some refreshments for the attendees.



On December 18th, we held our Consumer Christmas social at the Hartsville Armory. Consumers were encouraged to invite two family members or friends to join them. We had great food and entertainment. DJ services were provided by Mr. and Mrs. Saxton. Mr. and Mrs. Gandy visited as Santa and Mrs. Claus. Mr. B's catered the event. If you missed the social, we hope you attend the next one!

Be sure to join us at the Family Advisory Council's annual Valentine Social on February 15th from 6 pm to 8 pm at Bridging the Gap. There will be food, a DJ, a photographer, and an appearance by Elvis! We hope to see you there!



Calendar of Upcoming Events

January 29.....Board of Directors Meeting
February 15.....FAC Valentine Social
February 26.....Board of Directors Meeting
March 13-14.....Annual Training
March 25.....Board of Directors Meeting
TBA.....Lake Darpo Picnic

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A Message from the Director by Ruth Thomas, Executive Director

2007 was a grand year for all of us here at the DCDSNB, with many positive changes. We've had many challenges and obstacles to overcome, but we've also had many celebrations and victories. We've celebrated the departure of Licensing, Delmarva Compliance Reviews and DHEC, and we survived! We're mourned the loss of loved ones of our own and of our consumers, but we still celebrate the lives they lived. We did all of this because we stuck together as a TEAM. We say here at the Darlington County Disabilities and Special Needs Board that TEAM means Together Everyone Achieves More, and we have proven that during 2007. I read a poem recently that I thought was so appropriate to share with the staff and the readers of the Challenger as we go into 2008.



Everything We Do

*We may not always realize that everything we do
Affects not only our lives but touches others too.
A single happy smile can always brighten up the day
For anyone who happens to be passing by your way.
And a little bit of thoughtfulness that shows someone you care
Creates a ray of sunshine for both of you to share
Yes, every time you offer someone a helping hand,
Every time you show a friend you understand.
Every time you have a kind and gentle word to give,
You help someone to find beauty in this precious life we live.
For happiness brings happiness and loving ways bring love,
And giving is the treasure that contentment is made of.*

(Author Unknown)



EAC News by Byron Wilson, EAC President

In the past few months, the Employee Advisory Council has been working hard on planning this year's annual Employee Christmas Party. We are very excited to be having the party at the Hartsville Country Club. We feel that the Country Club will offer us the type of atmosphere we need to have an exciting and successful Christmas Party. This year, the party will have over 100 people attending, a DJ to provide music and a photographer onsite to take pictures. During the party, the agency will announce the recipient of the Lou Scott Award and the Employee of the Year Award. There will be door prizes donated by local merchants. Congratulations to the employees of the month for September, October, and November: Vonoka Kind, Joni Pendergrass, and Geraldine Brown. My sincere thanks and appreciation to each member of the EAC for their faithfulness and dedication that they have given to the council this year.

Employees of the Month



Vonoka Kind (right)
September EOM



Joni Pendergrass (right)
October EOM



Geraldine Brown (left)
November EOM

Welcome New Employees!

Patrick Jones, DSP
Dyal Hough, DSP
Valerie Davis, DSP
Glynn Willis, DSP
Alexander McDonald, DSP
Michelle Moses, DSP
Ivan Shay Price, DSP

Promotions

Deb Newsome, EI Supervisor
Leigh Tedder, Full Time EI

Congrats!

Employee Anniversaries

15 Years of Service

Ann Lighty

14 Years of Service

Byron Wilson

11 Years of Service

Priscilla Soney

10 Years of Service

Dianne Mickens
Margie Muldrow

8 Years of Service

Linda Ann Atkinson
Bridget McClendon
Wilton Griffith

7 Years of Service

Melinda Carraway
Lillie Moses

6 Years of Service

Tammy Johnson

5 Years of Service

Desiree Brown
Jarmiller Moses

4 Years of Service

Cynthia Graham

3 Years of Service

Brandy McCrae
Elizabeth
Hollingsworth

2 Years of Service

Edith Frazier
Barbara Smith

1 Year of Service

Alice Catoe
Bernice Howle
Eustashia King
Clarissa Joe

Profile of Service

by Tammy Johnson
Service Coordinator Supervisor

Mr. James "Jimmy" Long, Jr. was a 50 year old man who resided in Bennettsville, SC. He had a C-5 spinal cord injury when he was 22 years old that resulted in quadriplegia. Mr. Long was a very intelligent young man with physical limitations only. Despite his physical condition, Mr. Long graduated from USC in 1995 with a BS in Science and was a good writer and speaker. While at USC, he began working as an advocate for the disabled. Mr. Long assisted in getting increased transportation for the physically challenged community in Columbia. They began with two vans and have increased to twenty five. He was instrumental in getting electric doors installed at the USC campus as well as more handicapped parking spaces. He wrote grants to get increased hours with CLTC. One of Mr. Long's projects was to get electric doors installed at the main entrances of doctors offices and the project was complete in one week. In 1993, he was appointed to Mayor Cobles's Yellow Light Committee whose purpose was to study traffic congestion during peak traffic hours. When Mr. Long completed college, he started projects in his neighborhood for disabled persons. He wrote a grant for exercise equipment to be provided to his local recreational center for the physically handicapped, assisted in fund raisers for different churches, and volunteered in his local organization. Mr. Long worked hard wherever he saw a need in his community. In August of 2006, he heard about a fellow quadriplegic who lost his home and moved into a small mobile home with no air conditioning and temperatures over 100 degrees.

Mr. Long was able to secure two air units for the man the day after hearing of his problem. Mr. Long was credited with organizing the local Spinal Cord Association and was on its state board. He was also the founder of Priority One Home Health Care. Sadly, Mr. Long died on December 19, 2007.



Pictured left to right: Shannon Bennett, Health Care Coordinator and RN; Dawanda Brown, LPN; and Juanita Joe, LPN.

Our nurses were proud to host the Counterpart Nurses Meeting in December at the Scott Center. Nurses from other boards stated that this meeting was the best so far. Great Job, Ladies!

Health Corner

by Shannon R. Bennett, R.N.
Health Care Coordinator

It is flu season again. Let's be prepared!

Influenza is a contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. Therefore, it cannot be treated with antibiotics. Normally, flu season lasts from November through March. Common symptoms of the flu include: fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny nose, muscle aches, and stomach symptoms such as diarrhea and vomiting.

The flu is usually spread by droplet contact when infected persons cough or sneeze. Good hand washing is critical in decreasing the spread of infection. Most importantly, we should all take advantage of the flu vaccine.

ICF News

by Carolyn Sifford, QMRP/ICF/MR Unit Director

This has been an exciting but busy time for the Bowen and Reagan homes. Our consumers love to have a good time and these past few months have been filled with fun!

In October, everyone enjoyed the Halloween Party at Bridging the Gap, which included costumes and refreshments. Then in November, some of our consumers enjoyed attending the Catfish Festival in Society Hill, the annual FAC Hayride at the Scott Center, and the annual Consumer Thanksgiving Dinner held at Lakeview Baptist Church. December brought the Progress Energy Christmas Party and the annual Consumer Christmas Party at the Armory. Both houses went on a short beach trip to see the Christmas lights at Brookgreen Gardens on December 15th.

The new year will bring some changes to the houses as we will be welcoming new consumers to the Bowen and Reagan residences.



Quality Corner

by Wilton Griffith, Residential Administrator

One of the Council's Outcomes for those we serve is that "People exercise rights." Those using our services often do not understand their rights and as a result, do not fully exercise their rights. People have human and legal rights. They need to know what their rights are, how to exercise those rights, and what to do when rights are infringed upon. People also need to know their responsibilities to others so others rights are not compromised. The Darlington Board has recently developed and implemented a training program for employees so employees have an understanding of rights and that those we serve have the same rights as the rest of us. Along with training employees, we will, in late January, implement rights and responsibilities training for people who use our services. This training will empower all to more fully exercise their rights and represents a major improvement in our service orientation!

Children's Programs Update

by Sue Woodham, Bright Beginnings Administrator



The children from Bright Beginnings participated in several events to celebrate Halloween during the month of October. The Bright Beginnings children went to The Pumpkin Patch sponsored by Wesley United Methodist Church on October 15. They enjoyed listening to the Halloween Stories and singing songs. Each child was able to choose their very own pumpkin to take home. The children also participated in "Special Treats for Special Kids" at the Florence Civic Center on October 25. This event is sponsored by WBTW News 13. Afterwards, they enjoyed an outing to McDonald's in Florence to eat lunch. We would like to thank all of our parents who helped and participated in this event with us. On Halloween, we dressed up in our costumes and went to Bridging the Gap to enjoy a Halloween party sponsored by The Self Advocacy Council group My Choice, My Voice, Too. The children really enjoyed themselves and we had 3 winners in the Best Costume contest. They were Sidney Cranford, Logan Gainey, and Elijah Anderson. The children, BB staff, and EI Staff celebrated Thanksgiving with a Traditional Thanksgiving Dinner on November 19 at

Bright Beginnings. The children dressed as Pilgrims and Indians to enjoy the Thanksgiving Feast. The Hartsville Memorial Children's Librarian, Lori Strickland, began coming to Bright Beginnings on December 10 to read to our children. We are very excited to have the opportunity to participate in this program again. We are also looking forward to participating in "Book It! Beginners" sponsored by Pizza Hut in the months of March and April 2008.



We have had some changes and promotions in EI Department. Congratulations to Deb Newsome who is the new EI Supervisor and to EI Leigh Tedder who has assumed a full time EI position. The EI Department is also very proud to have another DCDSNB Employee of the Month. Congratulations to Joni Pendergrass on being selected as October Employee of the Month.



Special Thanks to St. Luke United Methodist Church's Covenant Sunday School Class. Volunteers painted the walls at Bright Beginnings on December 27th. Thanks so much!

Self Advocacy News

by Jarmiller Moses
Self Advocacy Advisor



We were very busy during the months of October and November. We traveled to the Pathways to Independence Conference at Myrtle Beach on October 19th. Elise and Tina won very nice door prizes. A good time was had by all.

My Voice, My Choice, Too sponsored a big Halloween celebration at Bridging the Gap. We had a super time and we hope this will become an annual event for us.



Day Program Update

by Violet Johnson, Day Programs Supervisor

The Bridging the Gap Workshop got into the Christmas spirit by putting up Christmas decorations. If you visited the Gap during December, you saw two beautiful Christmas trees. One of the trees was decorated in gold and silver to represent the gold the Three Wisemen gave to the baby Jesus. The second tree was decorated in red representing the blood that Jesus shed for us all. The consumers are excited about Christmas and decorated their classrooms with different Christmas pictures that they made and painted themselves. On the last day that we were open for Christmas, a friend of the Gap who wishes to remain anonymous provided lunch for the Gap consumers and staff.

The consumers at the Workshop have been very busy since last quarter. The lawn crew recently spent a week working the grounds at the Damascus Church cemetery and they did a wonderful job. The Greater Darlington Chamber of Commerce has been great about sending materials to the Center that they need mailed out for the consumers to work on. Our consumers have completed over 3,500 items for them. Our consumers love to work and really appreciate the opportunity that the Chamber has given them to earn some extra money.

FAC Corner

The Family Advisory Council held its annual Fall Hayride on November 19th. We had a great turnout for the event -- many consumers, parents, and staff attended making the total count nearly 100. Mr. John Rogers operated the Hayride and everyone enjoyed Little Caesar's pizza, hot chocolate or soda, and cookies. Stephen Hartzelle helped out by operating the CD player that provided music for dancing. Everyone had a wonderful time.



Darlington County Disabilities Foundation (DCDF) would like to thank all of our generous donors. The following Donations were received since the last printing of the Challenger.

*Charles Dunlap
George Wilds
Clayton Richardson
Reindhard Lange
Dominic Davis
Mary Lowery
Tamara Brown
Woodrow Moses
Byron Wilson
Crystal Crowley*

*Jarmiller Moses
Shannon Bennett
Sharon Dubose
Virginia Coleman
Sue Woodham
General Taylor
Hartsville Lion's Club
Progress Energy
St. Luke's Methodist Church*

*Peebles Department Store of Hartsville
United Way of Hartsville
United Way of Darlington
Byerly Foundation*

*A Memorial Gift was received In
Memory of Raymond Davis from
Ruth Thomas*

****Donations are appreciated; envelopes
are included for your convenience.***

Employee Christmas Party

On December 21st, our Employee Christmas Party was held at the Hartsville Country Club. We had several special guests including Senator Malloy, Ms. Lou Scott, Ms. Lou Harrison, Mr. & Mrs. King, Mr. & Mrs. Lee, and Mr. & Mrs. Caldwell. Of course, Ms. Scott is our founder. Mrs. Amanda King is our Board chairperson and Mrs. Jean Lee is our Board Secretary on our Board of Directors. Mr. Lamar Caldwell serves on our Foundation. Our Employee of the Year and Lou Scott Award winners were announced. Vonoka Kind, a Direct Support Professional at Bridging the Gap, was Employee of the Year. Mary Lowery, a Service Coordination Assistant and Receptionist, was chosen for the Lou Scott Award. The Lou Scott Award recipient is someone who has made a profound impact on the lives of those we serve in some significant way.



Byron Wilson, Vonoka Kind, and
Gloria Campbell



Ms. Lou Scott, Mary Lowery, and
Ruth Thomas

Job Development News

by Gloria McPhail, Job Coach

This quarter has been busy and exciting. In November, I attended a training seminar in Columbia on Job Search methods, First Impressions on Employers, and the importance of developing an efficient system. The seminar was very informative and I learned a lot that I will utilize in helping our consumers. During every quarter, many area Job Coaches get together for counterpart meetings. Our most recent meeting was on December 7th. We covered several topics including consumers with criminal backgrounds and companies that hire consumers. I was proud to announce that our agency hired one of our consumers as a Direct Support Professional. This quarter also brought a new consumer from Darlington to the program. Her name is Kimberly Gainey and I look forward to helping her find the right job.

Finance News

by Julia Bilsky, Account Technician II

This holiday season has certainly been an opportunity to observe the outpouring of love and support for our consumers by members of the community! Thank you for all you have done to bring joy to each individual we serve. Happy New Year from the finance department! We are currently instituting a new software program for management of agency funds. We will be running live on the new software January 2, 2008. While every change brings adjustments, the new software promises to provide better reporting to our program managers to allow them to manage more effectively. We are excited to bring these new capabilities to our agency. The Bi-Lo BoosterPlus Program is under way. You can help Darlington County DSN Board just by purchasing your groceries as usual. There is no additional cost to you, and contributions from the program will help us with funding needed to better serve our consumers. Please stop by the Scott Center, or call Julia Bilsky at 332-7252, extension 104, and request the form you need to have scanned one time to enroll in the program. We will be happy to mail it to you.

Abbreviation/Acronyms

DCDSNB - Darlington County Disabilities and Special Needs Board
DCDF - Darlington County Disabilities Foundation
ICF - Intermediate Care Facility
CTH - Community Training Home
SC - Service Coordinator
EAC - Employee Advisory Committee
EI - Early Interventionists
FAC - Family Advisory Council
DSP - Direct Support Professional

Darlington County Disabilities
and Special Needs Board
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Executive Director

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