

Empowering Individuals Through Advocacy and Support

The Lens



June 2009 Edition

With this issue of The Lens, we will begin a regular series of success stories regarding persons we support.

Greg Lalky

Greg Lalky has had a long-time dream of representing the USA Boccia team in an international competition. His dream became a reality this February when he was notified of his selection to do just that at the America's Cup competition to be held this October in Montreal, Canada. Greg is one of four players who have been selected to represent the United States.

Greg has played boccia for the KC Power and Speed team sponsored by Jackson County Parks and Special Recreation for the past 15 years. He participates in the annual regional Mid America Games held the first weekend each May and has been part of the team selection for National competition the past six years. Nationally, Greg has brought home the Bronze trophy four times and twice his team has won the Gold. Greg is ranked 3rd on the national level. The World championships will take place in 2010, World Cup in 2011 and Paralympics Games in 2012. Greg is hopeful he will do well in future competitions so that he can qualify for those games as well.

As exciting as regional and national tournaments are, nothing compares to being selected to represent the United States, says Greg. He feels very fortunate to be part of a team with such great coaches and fellow teammates. 🇺🇸



Barbara

Barbara is a dynamic woman. Although her life has had its ups and downs along with more than her fair share of disappointments she has persevered – an enduring trademark. She recently left a job that she had for several years. This change has opened up many new possibilities for Barbara. She is spending her time looking into volunteer opportunities, attending college classes and starting her own business.

She has grown as a self-advocate and is working to further her knowledge of her rights. She currently volunteers for eitas and will be representing the

agency at the “Building a Better Tomorrow” conference in June. Barbara has many interests. She is passionate about her book collection and is an avid reader. She loves going to secondhand stores

and rummage sales to search for books and other things that she collects. In her spare time she enjoys listening to the radio and watching TV. Barbara has always believed in herself but not always had people

around her that shared that belief. Her future is full of possibilities as she puts it “...at this time in my life, I can do anything.” 🇺🇸

“At this time in my life, I can do anything”



Parade of Playhouses Update

As reported in our March newsletter, eitas participated in the Habitat for Humanity Parade of Playhouses fundraising event in April. Staff volunteered many hours to create our accessible “castle” with a drawbridge ramp that allowed children in wheelchairs to go inside. All of our work paid off as the eitas playhouse won second place in the Children’s Choice Award and took First place in the Public Choice Award. Special thanks to Marvin Blake, Michael Haseltine, Tracy Mauk, Denise Rothwell, Kristen Yates, Kathleen Ganaden, and Steve Elmer who helped work on the playhouse. 🏡



Autism Run/Walk Team

eitas staff will be participating as a team in this year’s Royal’s 5K Run/Walk on September 5th. Portions of the proceeds from this event will go to the Autism Alliance of Greater Kansas City. 🏡

Annual Meeting

The eitas Annual Board meeting was held on April 28th and was another resounding success. With over 630 persons in attendance, awards were presented in new categories this year, (award recipients and their photographs are available in the eitas Annual Report). Dignitaries in attendance included State Representative Jeff Grisamore, Jackson County Executive Mike Sanders, Mayor Don Reimal of Independence, Jackson County Legislator Theresa Garza Ruiz, and Isabella Harris from the Governor’s Council on Disabilities.

Funding the Needs

Another state budget has been completed and will start July 1, 2009 for the 2010 fiscal year. We are pleased to report that Governor Nixon and the legislature included additional funding for two important areas for the Division of Developmental Disabilities. Caseload growth was given \$5.8 million to provide new Medicaid services. This is estimated to take some 850 people off of the statewide waiting list for DD supports, but will still leave over 3,600 people on the waiting list. Some 62 people in the Kansas City Region with a residential Priority of Need score from 10 to 12 should receive funding for services. Another 66 in that same scoring range may receive in-home services, but that still leaves almost 1,200 people in our area on the waiting list with a variety of unmet needs. A much needed additional \$2.2 million was allocated to the transition of young adults from school and early intervention services for children with autism. Again – very worthwhile and needed funding.

Now 3,600 persons statewide remaining on a waiting list does not sound like a lot, but when you are one of those persons or family members hoping to get supports that you need, it means everything. We applaud the hard work and the effort that went into finalizing this year's budget by the House and Senate as well as considerable input from our new Governor. It was not an easy task getting any new dollars allocated to the Division of Developmental Disabilities, but we know that many citizens and advocates worked tirelessly to see that our loved ones would not go overlooked again this year. The

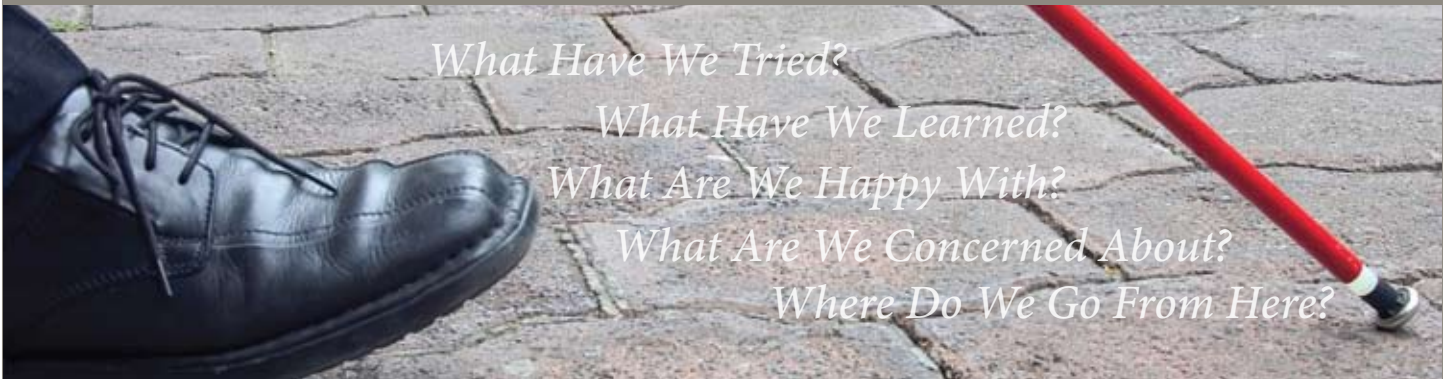
budget for 2011 looks to be even more difficult to resolve and we may not be able to avoid the budget axe next year, unless drastic improvements in the state and national economies occur.

One other item that caught our attention was a significant amount of capital improvement dollars that went to a large institution near St. Louis, the Bellefontaine Center. For many years this state-run institution has served persons with developmental disabilities – at one time housing almost 2,000



individuals. It now houses about 130 persons. Over the years with the advent of research and studies on the negative impacts institutionalization can have on individuals, decisions were made to if not close this institution to drastically downsize it and change its focus to more short-term crisis intervention services . But a small, vocal and politically

active group of parents has advocated preserving and even expanding the Bellefontaine Center. Their efforts were rewarded by the legislature and Governor with \$18 million in funding for renovations to the institution in the 2010 budget. The fact that is concerning is that only \$5.8 million was devoted to removing a few persons from the waiting list of 4,500, while \$18 million was devoted to the needs of 130 residents. The imbalance of this funding was apparently overlooked, but the results certainly point to the requirement for the parents, guardians and self-advocates of those 4,500 on the waiting list to be much more vocal and politically active than they have been; perhaps then everyone's needs could be funded. 🏠



Support Services

The Support Specialists have recently completed review meetings for the first quarter of 2009, with agencies funded by eitas. Each year the agencies identify the Missouri Quality Outcomes (MQOs) the agency will focus on in support of people with developmental disabilities. The purpose of the quarterly meetings is for the agency staff and Support Specialist to jointly review successes and determine the degree to which the MQOs are present. The Support Specialists are utilizing the 4 + 1 tool learned through the Transforming Teams training eitas employees received last year. Specifically, the review focuses on “What Have We Tried?, What Have We Learned?, What Are We Happy With?, What Are We Concerned About? and Where Do We Go From Here?” This approach has received a favorable response from the agencies, and has facilitated identifying many more positive outcomes than previously, and even more than agencies typically give themselves credit.

The Support Specialists continue to provide leadership to the Jackson County Gentle Teaching Network, and to the development of a culture of gentleness for the people we support, caregivers and agency staff. Two additional one-week training sessions have been conducted by Dr. John McGee so far this year resulting in the training of about

60 more Gentle Teachers and 6 additional Gentle Teaching Mentors. Two more week-long sessions will be held this year. Those dates are July 20-24 and August 31-September 4.

The concept of a culture of gentleness has become a reality for GT Mentors and agencies participating in the Gentle Teaching Training. Most importantly, the lives of the people we support through gentleness have changed dramatically. The Support Specialists and other GT Mentors will continue to share the success stories in the pages of the Lens.

A primary function of the Support Specialists for the past year has been providing information and referral, advocacy and processing transportation and funding requests. In addition to supports funded directly by eitas, efforts are underway to facilitate “natural” supports for people who contact eitas. That is based on encouraging and facilitating the development of friendships, circles of support and connecting with the community.

We strongly believe that embracing the Missouri Quality Outcomes, Gentle Teaching and Person Centeredness will truly enhance all of our lives.

For more information about Support Services, contact Nancy Nicolaus at 816-595-8250. 📞



Service Coordination

The second team of Service Coordinators is underway. Another suite has been leased and is able to accommodate 12 employees, 10 Service Coordinators, a Supervisor, and a future Intake Worker. Marvin Blake, Kathleen Ganaden and Michael Haseltine have been instrumental in getting comfortable working spaces created and supplies ordered so that people can hit the ground running. The first Service Coordination team has worked diligently putting an orientation manual together for new Service Coordinators. We are all getting excited about bringing on a new team of 10 Service Coordinators with some starting May 26th and others by June 1st. Thirteen interviews were conducted finding 11 candidates who offer cultural diversity, enthusiasm, a person centered philosophy and who want to be a part of the eitas team. Being

able to hire 10 people around the same time offers a unique opportunity for team building, consistency in training, and drastically reducing the wait list of Jackson County residents wanting Service Coordination from eitas.

The original Service Coordination team has been very busy providing services and supports to a total of 360 people. The Service Coordination program has begun its second year of providing high quality services and advocacy to the individuals we support. Out of the 10 original service coordinators, 7 plus the supervisor have been providing direct services for over a year.

Over the first three months of 2009, service coordinators have completed a variety of trainings including several offered at KCRO. The team finished the Transforming Teams training and are using many of the tools they learned in the meetings they facilitate. Several team members have also attended Gentle Teaching training and more will attend this summer. In addition, we are now scheduling speakers that are involved with resources in the community to come to our meetings on Monday mornings and introduce their resources to our service coordinators for future use. 🍌

eitas 2010 Grant funding process proposed timeline

Concept Proposals

June 15, 2009

July 10, 2009

July 13- 23, 2009

July 24, 2009

Request for Concept Proposals for new services posted on website

Concept Proposals Due

Concept Proposals reviewed and determined which ones will be accepted to submit a full proposal.

Entities submitting Concept Proposals informed as to the status of their proposal

Funding Applications

July 1, 2009

July 27 – August 7, 2009

September 3, 2009

Funding Application posted on the eitas website

Schedule Application Review for agencies/programs wishing to submit a funding request for 2010

2010 funding applications due.

Vocational Services

IBS Industries is working on a number of new initiatives to create new and different jobs in the community. A stand-alone recycling center and a retail operation are in the planning stages at the moment. The greenhouse project is still being finalized and a partnership with the Kansas City Parks Department is looking very positive as we explore all the options and opportunities involved in a greenhouse/retail operation. Final plans are being drawn for an extensive remodeling and expansion of the Foundation Workshop which

will begin once the Nova Program has vacated the site.

Residential Services

The White Oaks Group Home expansion and renovation was completed in mid-May and persons were able to move to their remodeled individual bedrooms. The home looks completely different inside and out and both the persons living there and their support staff are appreciative of the literally "new" home. eitas board members took a tour of it on May 20th and were impressed with the changes and improvements. The old Carriage House on 32nd street in Independence is

now up for sale having had some minor renovations and cleaning done to prepare it for sale.

Day Habilitation

The Nova Program's new facility has been completed and is awaiting final inspection from the City of Kansas City. Located at 8401 Hickman Mills, their new location easily accommodates both of their programs for adults and elderly adults with developmental disabilities as well as their administrative offices and still leaves room for future expansion. Developing Potential is still hard at work to develop a site in Lee's Summit and recently held a kick-off fundraiser

for their capital campaign. The Rainbow Center has been approved for their third site, so expansion is in the works for them as well

Transportation

Six new buses should be rolling into the DOT garages in June, replacing six old ones with high mileage and increased maintenance costs. Since federal match dollars are not available from MoDot this year, the purchase of these new buses was entirely funded by eitas. There are also three new routes being developed to further shorten ride times and better accommodate work schedules at various workshops.

September 14-18, 2009
September 30, 2009

eitas Staff review of proposals
Last date for any staff requested changes to funding applications

October 19-23, 2009
October 30, 2009

Special Board meeting to review 2010 funding requests
Feedback to agencies/programs regarding application status (i.e. Approved, Approved with Contingencies, Approval Pending – the Board has additional questions/concerns that need to be addressed - or Not Approved)

The above dates are subject to change as needed. Please check the eitas website (www.eitas.org) after June 15, 2009 for application updates, forms, funding policies, and deadlines.