

Progress Notes



Providing residential and support services to persons with disabilities since 1971. December, 2004

ARRM's 3rd Annual Community Enrichment Week

On October 10th approximately 75 staff and clients met at Jay Cooke State Park to kick-off Community Enrichment Week. This event developed by ARRM (Association of Residential Resources in Minnesota) is a chance for people of all abilities to work on improving our communities. It provides an opportunity for the general public to gain a better understanding of the contributions all people can make to their communities.

The DNR partnered with ARRM this year to clean up state parks throughout Minnesota. Mayor Herb Bergson provided us with a formal proclamation identifying the week of October 10th as Community Enrichment Week. Several providers from the area joined us in cleaning Jay Cooke Park. Those participating included RSI, Trillium, REM and Innovative Living.



Tammy Fish Receives Honor from ARC

Tammy Fish received the *Bill Sackter Citizenship Award* from the ARC at their Convention in October. The award recognizes an individual with developmental disabilities who has a job in the community, learns new skills, and is an active member of their community. The award was created in honor of Bill Sackter, a pioneer in Minnesota's self-advocacy movement.

Tammy moved to Virginia three years ago and lives at *DRCC-Lambert* with three other women. She volunteers for Groceries-to-Go where she shops and delivers groceries to the elderly. She always goes the extra mile by taking the time to visit and put the groceries away. She'll even take out their garbage or recycling. She does all this with a smile on her face.

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From the desk of the Executive Director

2005 LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK

After enduring a long and divisive campaign season we now need to look forward to Minnesota's 2005 Legislative session. There are several issues that continue to be important to DRCC, families and the individuals we serve. To have an impact, we all need to work together to make our case to legislators and advocate for changes.

This is likely to be very challenging. Based on the state's budget projections, the 2005-2006 biennium will be tight financially. The state is again projecting a deficit – current estimates range from 500 million to 1 billion.

That means more cuts or tax/fee/revenue increases. If the past few years are any example, all of this will be contested in a very partisan and contentious fashion.

There are three main issues that we see as priorities to address with legislators.

1. A rate increase (even a small one) is important for the services we provide. Like everyone else, we have been hit hard with increases to our health insurance premiums, and to our fuel/heating costs. We are just coming off of a two-year budget cycle where

our rates were cut by 1% the first year and frozen the second year. I believe we have been successful in managing the past two years without having any negative impact on the services we are providing. However, two more years without a funding increase would clearly have an impact.

“We don't have the resources to make big contributions to campaigns. But we do have something arguably more powerful and more influential: You.”

2. Co-payments and caps for clients need to be modified. In the budget-balancing plan of 2003, clients were required to make co-payments for medications and all medical appointments. Additionally, a \$500 annual cap was put in place for dental services. Philosophically, it makes sense to have co-payments for services. However, for some individuals who have significant medical problems, the co-payments are taking too much of their limited resources. In some cases it can be 25-40% of their limited personal needs funds.

3. Fees for families need to be modified. Again, in the budget-balancing plan of 2003 fees were increased for families who had children receiving services. In some cases the fees were increased dramatically. We have had families withdraw from services because they could not afford the fees. We want to advocate for a system where the fees are reasonable and fair.

We will be working cooperatively with families, consumers, providers, advocacy groups and our trade association (ARRM)

to advocate for these changes. ARRM's Executive Director, Bruce Nelson, put it this way: “We don't have the resources to make big contributions to campaigns. But we do have something arguably more powerful and more influential: You. It's true. Legislators pay more attention to a lot of constituent voters saying the same thing than they do to any amount of campaign contributions”. ARRM has challenged us to contact every legislator to educate them on the issues critical to us. I hope you will join in this effort.

Employee Milestones



The work of DRCC is carried out by its many dedicated staff. We are again recognizing staff who have reached a milestone anniversary over the first six months of the year. Without exception, the following employees have shown a commitment to the people they work with - staff and clients, loyalty to DRCC, and a desire to make lives better.

20 YEARS

Judy Sausen was a full-time employee for nearly 15 years and has been working as a part-time employee for the past 5 years at *DRCC-Winona*. In addition to her work with DRCC, she volunteers at Loaves and Fishes, is a peace activist, and enjoys the outdoors.

15 YEARS

Denise (Dee Dee) Smith is the Program Director at *DRCC-Oneota*. She began working for DRCC in July of 1989 working every other weekend as a Program Implementor. Dee Dee is a member of the Staff Training Committee and has been providing training to new employees since 1995. She enjoys walking, biking, gardening, and spending time with her children.

Sherry Olson is DRCC's Payroll Coordinator. Sherry is a life-long area resident, is married, and has two grown children. Sherry enjoys bingo, movies, traveling, and spending time with her grandchildren.

Tim Schumann is the Program Director at *DRCC-Noumenon*. Tim enjoys the outdoors – hunting, fishing, and camping; cooking, and his family.

Carolyn Marino is a full-time Program Coordinator at *DRCC-Manumit*. Carolyn lives with her husband in rural Duluth Township. Carolyn's interests include politics (she is active in local government and is on her township zoning committee), gardening, reading, snowshoeing, country living, and classical music.

Karen Meagher is a full-time Program Director splitting her time between the *DRCC-Valley* and *DRCC-Gateway* programs. Karen and her children live in West Duluth. Her interests include reading, biking, and camping.

Alan Denman began working part-time for DRCC when he was a student at UMD in 1986 and has been a full-time Program Director at *DRCC-Riverside* since November 1989. Al is passionate about many areas of interest including hunting, gardening, rowing, coaching wrestling, and spending time with his family. Together with his wife, Brenda, he has three children.

10 YEARS

We have a number of employees who reached their 10 year anniversary.

Rochelle Nelson
Program Director at Daniels

Rachel Rogers
Program Assistant at Daniels

MaryAnn McGee
Program Assistant at Carlton

Jill Korpela-Bontems
Program Assistant at Northside

Employee Promotions

DRCC is very appreciative of our staff and would like to recognize the following employee promotions over the last half of 2004.

*The following employees have been promoted to **Program Director**:*

Jolynn Detlefsen - *IHFS-Lake*

Jane Forsline - *IHFS-Range*

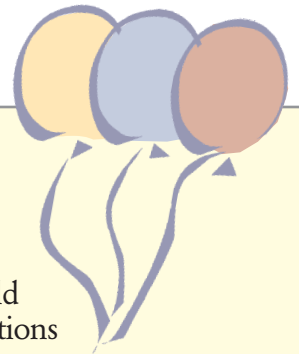
Terri Koskinen - *Fourteenth*

*The following employees have been promoted to **Program Coordinator**:*

Michael Johnson - *Jitney*

Lisa Lynn Elijah - *Harbor 15*

Sandy Stordahl - *IHFS-Range*



DRCC'S FIFTH ANNUAL "Golf with the Stars"

On August 27th DRCC held its Fifth Annual "Golf with the Stars" fundraising event. More than 65 guests joined DRCC for an enjoyable evening of activities including a social hour and putting contest, dinner, live and silent auctions, and a round of golf under the stars. This year's event raised more than \$7,500.

We want to thank everyone who contributed to this fundraiser. The proceeds are used to meet special requests and unmet needs of individuals who are served by DRCC. The event's success would not have been possible without the generous support from all the sponsors, contributors, and those who participated.

Mark your 2005 calendars – DRCC's 6th Annual "Golf with the Stars" will be August 26th.



Dick Olson won this year's putting contest.

DRCC WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR HOLE SPONSORSHIPS:

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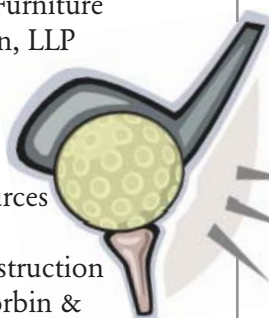
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Magic Carpet
Krause Sheet Metal
Minnesota Wild
Spirit Mountain Travel Lodge
Minnesota Twins

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Deb Oliver, Dennis Ramberg, Angela Dougherty,
Tony Mancuso, and John DeCaro

...Tammy Fish *continued from page 1*



Shown with Tammy (center) are Pam Gonnella, ARC President (left) and Clifford Poetz, self-advocate (right).

On her day off she also volunteers with the Meals On Wheels program. She has a permanent route and delivers 8-9 meals each week. Here again, she goes out of her way to accommodate and help each of the people on the route.

Two years ago Tammy quit her job at a sheltered workshop and began a community job as a housekeeper at Fortune Bay Casino. This was her first community job and she was very proud when she was hired. One year after she began she was offered extra shifts because of the great job she was doing.

Tammy's goal is to move into her own apartment in the next five years. There is little doubt that she will achieve this goal. Tammy is a great inspiration and role model for those around her. She is a worthy recipient of this award!

IHFS-Range

The *In-Home Family Support-Range* program has gradually continued to grow over the past several years, from 4 to over 40 clients and their families. We started out in the lower level of the *DRCC-Northside* home in Virginia with 4 clients. After another dozen referrals we rented a three-bedroom apartment in Virginia that we used as a drop-in center for activities and for overnight respite.

At the same time that we were feeling the need for more space for our IHFS program, St. Louis County requested Semi Independent Living Support Services (SILS) for several of their clients. We felt very fortunate to find a 5-plex in Virginia in a nice residential neighborhood. After a flurry of rewiring, painting, carpeting, installing ramps, and renovating a bathroom to make it



wheelchair accessible, we moved to the new apartments in October 2004. We are using two of the apartments for IHFS and three are rented out to individual clients who continue to receive support services through *IHFS-Range*.

Due to the size of the program we have split it in half and added another Program Director, Jane Forsline. Jane has worked for DRCC for three years with prior experience at NHS and LSS.

New Program - MELROSE

When *DRCC-Jitney* moved this summer, we retained the home, re-named the program *DRCC-Melrose*, and began providing services in August to a 15-year-old young man. Eventually, we hope to serve two teenage boys at this location. It will be ideally suited for two active young people.

Thank You!

A special thanks to the following individuals and businesses who have contributed to DRCC during the past six months.

Tony Mancuso
Thomas and Julie Seideman
Two Harbors Knights of Columbus

*We gratefully acknowledge donations made by the following individuals in memory of **Bill France** (a longtime employee of DRCC-Harbor 15).*

Margaret France
Patricia Gromak
Ronald Munson



728 Garfield Avenue
Duluth, MN 55802-2634
(218) 722-8180

MISSION STATEMENT

DRCC provides direct and supporting residential services to persons with disabilities. These services assure that each person exerts the greatest possible control over their life, and provides an environment in which each person has an opportunity to develop relationships with others.



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The Duluth Regional Care Center is a private, non-profit organization. Services are paid with a combination of funds from St. Louis, Carlton, and Lake County Social Services, the State of Minnesota and the Federal Medicaid Program.