

WINTER/SPRING NEWSLETTER

WHAT DEFINES US March is Disability Awareness Month

In 1987 President Ronald Reagan proclaimed March "Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month." The deinstitutionalization movement of the seventies and early eighties laid the foundation for significant social change. The presidential proclamation called upon Americans to

EMPLOYMENT DEFINES US AS INDIVIDUALS AND EMPLOYMENT GIVES MEANING TO OUR LIVES. THINK TO YOURSELF, WHAT IS ONE OF THE FIRST QUESTIONS YOU ASK SOMEONE WHEN YOU MEET THEM FOR THE FIRST TIME. "WHAT DO YOU DO? WHERE DO YOU WORK?"

provide the "encouragement and opportunities" necessary for people with developmental disabilities to reach their potential.

As we celebrate the 29th anniversary of this proclamation, the need for "encouragement and opportunities" still exists.

I-REACH 2 Inc. has been providing services to adults with developmental disabilities and/or brain injuries since 1999. We have always been an advocate of employment for

individuals with disabilities and we believe everyone should have the opportunity to work in their community.

Employment defines us as individuals and employment gives meaning to our lives. Think to yourself, what is one of the first questions you ask someone when you meet them for the first time. "What do you do? Where do you work?" Imagine you are not able to answer those questions. What if no one had asked you what you wanted to be when you grew up? Where would you be? Who would you be?

I-REACH 2 Inc. has the pleasure of working alongside many employers in Casper who employ our participants. These employers are the "All Stars" of our community, by being flexible and open to differences. On behalf of the individuals we serve, we thank you.

Yes, a quarter century after the establishment of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, the world has changed in important ways. Much, though, remains to challenge us. In the coming years, we'll need to fight not only for more advances but to retain the accomplishments of past decades. It is a fight in which we must all engage.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

I-REACH 2 will be the featured charity for Thankful Thursday on March 17, 2016 at the Beacon Club.

We are busy putting together a fantastic assortment of auction items, including items made by the participants of our sewing and photography classes. See you there at 5:00pm!! See page 5 of this newsletter for photos of some of the items up for grabs!

WHAT IS EMPLOYMENT FIRST AND WYAPSE?

Employment First is the policy of the state; whereas, competitive and integrated employment shall be considered the first option when serving persons with disabilities who are of working age to obtain employment. Employment first applies to programs and services that provide services and support to help obtain employment for persons with disabilities.

The Association of Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) was born approximately 25 years ago. The country was in need of a permanent advocacy group for individuals with significant disabilities. APSE operates at the state and federal level, supporting policy which promotes integrated community employment as the first option for individuals with significant disabilities. They also promote newsletter briefs and members receive the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, an international journal, and they hold an annual conference. Membership is open to anyone who has an interest in supported employment including students, business owners, parents, guardians and disability providers.

Wyoming had a state APSE chapter which was successful for a period of time in the late 1990's and earlier 2000's, but membership fizzled out around 2006. In 2014 the Wyoming State Legislature passed the Employment First Initiative. The passing of the bill presented an opportunity for the rebirth of the group.

Previous members of WYAPSE, members of the Wyoming Governors Council on Development Disabilities, case managers and disability providers came together to reform the chapter known as WYOASPE.

I-REACH 2 Inc. Executive Director Tina Conley and Service Coordinator Jaime Bordeaux-Cureton serve on the WYOASPE board as they operate as a chapter in development for the next year. A chapter in development works to create their by-laws, articles of incorporation and to establish other supports to operate as a 501c3 entity. In addition to building the administrative structure of the chapter, members are assigned the task of recruiting new members. In order to be a complete chapter there must be 20 registered and paid members. WYOAPSE is an important advocacy group moving forward the Employment First Initiative. Activities planned for the future are a state-wide employment conference and quarterly newsletters. If you or someone you know is interested in joining WYOAPSE please contact Tina or Jaime.

MEGA CONFERENCE COMING SOON!

The Wyoming Governors Council on Developmental Disabilities sponsors the largest disability related conference in our state... Please mark your calendars for June 15-16 in Cheyenne!



BEING IN COMMUNITY...

With the Centers for Medicaid Services (CMS) final rule of 2014 regarding the delivery of home and community based services, we are challenged and mandated to provide services in ways that allows individuals to become a greater part of our community....

Despite the cold and windy Wyoming winter, I-REACH 2 participants have remained active in our community through many different volunteer opportunities. Several participants volunteer around the community at such places as Joshua's Storehouse, Food for Thought, and Restoration Church Food Pantry helping stock shelves and creating food baskets.

For the history buffs, our participants have taken advantage of classes offered by the Casper College. These classes include "Studies of the Western Frontier," and "The Salem Witch Trials."

Still, other participants are taking art classes at the Nicolaysen Art Museum or keeping fit by working out at the Warehouse.

When not in the community participants are actively engaged in a variety of classes such as Art, Science, and Culture cooking. Participants also have an opportunity to work with job developers in the work studies class or enhance their budgeting skills in the money management courses.

Coming this spring participants will be given the opportunity to take Yoga or Tia Chi classes through the college. They will also be creating fun sewing and photography pieces that will be up for auction at our I-REACH for Art Fundraiser coming this summer. Our 2015 performance indicators show that 72% of our Day Services participants are accessing their community on a regular basis. This is up from 29% just two short years ago!

For individuals in our residential services, we continue to promote and implement strategies that allow for personal choice, greater community access, and living a life of one's choosing. We have reduced the numbers of individuals living in our group homes to 4 or less full-time residents, added additional program vehicles to support a larger variety of

community-based activities, and have committed extra program budget funds to increase our access to the community. In April of 2015 we began tracking the number of community activities residential service participants took part in and we are proud to share that from April to December we logged 1,454 community-based outings!

WE MUST BECOME BIGGER THAN WE
HAVE BEEN: MORE COURAGEOUS,
GREATER IN SPIRIT, LARGER IN
OUTLOOK. WE MUST BECOME
MEMBERS OF A NEW RACE,
OVERCOMING PETTY PREJUDICE,
OWING OUR ULTIMATE ALLEGIANCE
NOT TO NATIONS BUT TO OUR FELLOW
MEN WITHIN THE HUMAN COMMUNITY.

~HAILE SELASSIE

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CMS FINAL RULE OF 2014

- The setting is integrated in and supports full access to the greater community;
- Is selected by the individual from among setting options;
- Ensures individual rights of privacy, dignity and respect, and freedom from coercion and restraint;
- Optimizes autonomy and independence in making life choices; and
- Facilitates choice regarding services and who provides them.

The final rule also includes additional requirements for provider-owned or controlled home and community-based residential settings. These requirements include:

- The individual has a lease or other legally enforceable agreement providing similar protections;
- The individual has privacy in their unit including lockable doors, choice of roommates and freedom to furnish or decorate the unit;
- The individual controls his/her own schedule including access to food at any time;
- The individual can have visitors at any time; and
- The setting is physically accessible.

PROGRAM REMINDERS

I-REACH 2 CASH HANDLING POLICY

It is our policy to have a maximum of \$50 on site for any individual living in our group homes. Funds in excess of this will be routed to the safety deposit box at First Interstate Bank. If you deliver money to either the group homes or the main office and you do not receive a receipt, please remind the staff on duty to prepare one for you.

PARTICIPANT MONTH END DOCUMENTATION

We continue to field questions regarding participant related month-end paperwork. I-REACH 2 provides this information to all program guardians and case manager via Therap. Therap is our online documentation system that has been in place since 2014. Included in month end is participant cash transactions, incident reports, program percentages, and other related information. Christina Burk, administrative coordinator, is always available to assist case managers and guardians in accessing their information.

WEBSITE AND EMAIL CHANGES

Effective in January of this year our website address has changed.

Our new web address is: www.ireach2.com

Since the majority of our communication with program guardians and case managers is ran through Therap we have eliminated many outside email addresses. The following is a list of company email contacts:

Tina Conley ,Executive Director: tina@ireach2.com

Jaime Cureton, Service Coordinator: jaime@ireach2.com

Jolene Cummings, Day Services Manager: jolene@ireach2.com

Frankee Foley, Administrative Specialist: frankee@ireach2.com

Christina Burk, Administrative Coordinator: christina@ireach2.com

Jo DePaolo, Business Manager: jo@ireach2.com

Bri Sonsoucic, Administrative Specialist; bri@ireach2.com

Job Coaches: jobcoaches@ireach2.com

THANKFUL THURSDAY GOODIES!

Pictured below are some of the items of for grabs on March 17th at the Beacon Club! We hope to see you there!



1955 VINTAGE KEGERATOR



3 IN 1 HARLEY DAVIDSON POKER TABLE



AVEDA Beauty Basket

Other items include:

- Original painting by C Concillo (client of IR2)
- Original drawing by C Carr (client of IR2)
- Harley Blanket (sewn by IR2 participants)
- Backwards Cocktail Party: round of drinks, paired appetizers, and tour.
- Jewelry from Dragonfly Beads
- Cadillac Margarita Basket
- Womens' Western Purse
- Antique Wine Decanter
- Table for 8 for the I-REACH for Art annual fundraiser

PLUS MANY OTHER UNIQUE ITEMS!

Hello from Curtis Street

Serenity House:

Hello from the Ladies at Serenity:

We are enjoying the warm weather and plan to take advantage of it. We are going to be taking walks around the neighborhood, going to the park, have some fun in the sun and hopefully play some Frisbee, baseball or learn to play Cricket. We do Zumba on Wednesday and WE LOVE IT!

On the 19th we are going to the aquatic center which we are looking forward to. We are encouraged to make healthy food choices and with "Special O" starting soon we need to be on the top of our game.

We are planning on a St. Patrick's party (bring on the Corned beef and cabbage). We are going to the Hibachi Buffet at the mall and some of us are going to try Sushi for the first time. Trying to expand our taste buds (wish us luck).

Curtis House:

Hello from Curtis House gentlemen:

We have a busy month. We are enjoying Zumba on Wednesday's and soon we will be starting Special O. We go to the Warehouse to work out on weekends to stay active. We are going swimming on the 24th and the Home and Garden Show on the 19th.

We can't just work on our physical health we need to also work on our mental health so we are going to the library and we will also be going to a movie or two. We are planning on doing some stargazing at the Planetarium and learning some of the constellations like *Sirius*, *Cygnus*, *Cassiopeia* and that *Polaris* is the brightest star in the *Ursa Minor* (you learn something new every day).

Harmony House:

Hello from Harmony House gentlemen:

We will be attending State Basketball games and Zumba. We are planning on going to the Planetarium. We are going to go out to eat but we haven't chosen a place yet; then a mall walk to help digestion and keeping in mind the dietary needs.

Garlic Vegetable Pasta Salad

Ingredients

4 cups cooked fusilli (about 8 ounces uncooked short twisted spaghetti)
3 cups [Grilled Antipasto Vegetables](#)
3/4 cup (3 ounces) crumbled feta cheese
1/2 cup chopped fresh basil
1/4 cup [Chile-Garlic Vinaigrette](#)
3 tablespoons chopped pitted kalamata olives

Preparation

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl, tossing gently.

LIFE IN PICTURES



IMPORTANT DATES:

March 8-10—Annual recertification survey with the Behavioral Health Division

March 15—I-REACH 2 Board of Directors Meeting

March 17—Thankful Thursday, 5pm at the Beacon Club

March 30—I-REACH 2 Inc Day of Service in recognition of disability awareness month

May 19-21—Special Olympics State Summer Games

June 15-16—MEGA Conference

August 13--I-REACH for Art Annual Fundraising Event

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