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Volume 5, Issue 1

Trish Talk

National Volunteer Week is April 23-29. From the early days of America, volunteers have pitched in to meet community needs – hospitals, orphanages, schools, etc. In fact, UCP of Greater Cleveland was formed by volunteers, parents of children with cerebral palsy seeking services for their children. Today, we are grateful to have the service of more than 300 volunteers each year! In fact, we would not exist if it were not for our volunteers – past and present!

Volunteers assist in general oversight of the agency, fundraising and program enrichment. Our 36-member Board of Directors oversee all aspects including hiring/firing of the President & CEO, financial sustainability, strategic focus on our mission and planning for the agency's future. They are, essentially, my boss. They also do a tremendous amount of work in building community awareness and fundraising.

Also helpful with fundraising are UCP staff, LeafBridge parents/families, and our Young Professionals Committee. Over the last ten years especially, many staff members and LeafBridge families have stepped up to raise an incredible amount of money through the Cleveland Triathlon and our 5k Race to Empower. In addition, our 15 Young Professional Committee members host an annual fundraiser, a summer family event and an adult client holiday party.



There are many other volunteers who enrich our programs. Our two Business Advisory Committees (Cuyahoga & Lorain Counties) are made up of more than 50 business owners and human resource professionals who support OakLeaf Partners in their efforts to identify employment opportunities for our clients. They hire our clients and refer them to their professional contacts. They also assist us in the

design of our annual Disabilities Hiring event which results in increasing our network of employers. This event grows more successful each year and will become increasingly important as we strive to place more clients with each passing year. Hawken School students and St. Martin De Porres High School students have enriched our adult
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Agency Highlights

LeafBridge, a Center of Excellence for Children. The baby boom in LeafBridge continues with the arrival of a new granddaughter, Hadley Claire, this month to Stefanie Koller, our Billing Support Specialist. Stefanie is happy that she can now buy pink! Congratulations, Grandma Stefanie! LeafBridge's staff also continues to grow as they welcome the following staff: Claire Mahon and Gloria Lewis are both new additions to the Administrative Support team; Teresita Santiago—COTA; and Karen Thompson—Occupational Therapist. Both Karen and Teresita are working in the Warrensville Heights School District. Heather Hoffman, PT has been assigned to OakLeaf Services here at Wolstein and Highland Hills. LeafBridge Therapy Services continues to support the needs of our adult clients serviced by the OakLeaf staff. Two winners have been announced in LeafBridge's "Name the Fish" contest. Please welcome *Sassy* and *Gilly*, our two fish mascots in LeafBridge. The faculty and staff of the Master of OT Program at Cleveland State University will be awarding the OT staff of UCP of Greater Cleveland an **Award of Distinction**. Every year CSU selects a therapist or fieldwork site that has made valuable contributions to the education of their students. CSU remarked that, "UCP has been a reliable, strong and consistent partner to our program, providing Practicum and Fieldwork experiences that have enhanced learning and growth to support our student's success." LeafBridge will be presented with this honor on April 20th during CSU's Distinguished Speaker Day. Congratulations to the LeafBridge OT staff!



UCP hosted training for all our Physical and Occupational Therapists on March 30th and 31st. This provided training for all staff as we begin to anticipate *STEPS to Independence* this summer. LeafBridge is also offering a two-day Introductory Course: PODD Communication Books. This will be held June 19-20. Lisa Burkhart will be the presenter and is a well-known teacher and leader in the field of assistive technology, adaptive play and augmentative communication. This event is open to therapist as well as to caregivers.

Nursing Updates. Welcome to Lisa Marie Bound, UCP's new LPN who joined UCP of Greater Cleveland on January 17th and is providing nursing services at the Memphis House. Carrienne Raymond, LPN, has transferred to the Day Services Program and is providing nursing services at Wolstein, Westlake and Highland Hills. Sadly, Edendale House lost a dear and treasured client, Ron J. in January. He will be truly missed.



OakLeaf Day Services (Wolstein, Westlake and Highland Hills). The Community Connectors staff have been very busy these last 3 months. The clients are frequently out in the community and enjoying the many outings planned for them by our hard-working Activities and Training staff. Some examples of these outings were: the Friendship Animal Shelter; Crawford Auto & Aviation museum; Harbor Freight Tool store; the IX Center; Dave & Buster's and the Natural History museum. Clients also had the opportunity to volunteer at the Westlake library and at the Trinity Cathedral. Highland Hills is scheduled to have their fourth classroom opened on April 1st. They plan on having key features in each classroom so that individuals are more frequently rotated and will be able to gain access to other activities outside of their own classroom. Double congratulations go out to Yatanya Cavor (formerly Humphrey) who was recently married and was promoted to Highland Hills' Case Manager position!

OakLeaf Job Training Services. Individuals enrolled in OakLeaf Job Training have continued to participate in opportunities to volunteer in the community. These opportunities are designed to assist clients at discovering their career path and to add experiences to their resumes. Volunteer sites include: The Ronald McDonald House, The Kids Book Bank, Eliza Bryant Senior Center, MedWish and the Cleveland Food Bank. The Oakleaf Giving Back Group has kicked off UCP's Annual Harvest for Hunger Drive. This year they decided against selling Easter candy and are selling Spring plants. Other fund raising opportunities include a Carnival, bake sales and an International Day. OakLeaf Job Training is expanding and is expecting several new program participants to begin in March along with an additional staff member.

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HR News and Notes

Employee of the Month (EOTM): Congratulations to our 2017 EOTM winners: **January** – Lakesha Porch, Day Services Activities Coordinator and **February** – Amanda Stohrer, Occupational Therapist Manager. Both Lakesha and Amanda went above and beyond their normal work responsibilities to assist UCP and its clients. Candy-grams were issued to thank all the other employees that were nominated for their extra efforts in the first two months of 2017.

Employee Appreciation Day: This year's nationwide Employee Appreciation Day was on Friday, March 3rd. Companies across the United States were given the opportunity to support, thank and reward their employees on this day for all of their hard work. UCP wanted to express our gratitude to OUR employees and show them how much we appreciate all that they do for UCP and our clients throughout the year. So UCP surprised our employees on Friday, March 3rd with breakfast and/or lunch in our various locations. Specially designed "Thank You" tee shirts were also given to our employees to further evidence UCP's gratitude to our tremendous group of hard working and dedicated staff.



Open Benefit Enrollment is now OPEN: Open Enrollment for UCP's benefit plans began on Monday, March 27th and runs through Friday, April 14th giving you 3 weeks and 2 weekends to make your selections. We are moving to a new benefits platform for enrollment – Benefits Connect – which will allow you to make all of your benefit plan elections in one system. No more paper applications! With this new platform, none of your current benefit elections will roll over so you **MUST** go into the new platform to select your benefits or waive if you are not electing our health insurance.

UCP has expanded its benefit offerings to our employees. In addition to health, vision, dental, STD, Accident, Critical Illness and Health Savings Accounts, we have two new voluntary benefit elections.

- **Voluntary Supplemental Life Insurance.** You may now purchase life insurance in addition to the company-provided group term life policy which is two times your annual earnings. You can add additional life insurance in \$10,000 increments and/or purchase coverage for your spouse or children through a discounted group plan.
- **Voluntary Identify Theft Protection.** LifeLock will alert you to a wide range of identity threats if someone tries to steal your identity.

The premiums for medical insurance did not increase this year while the cost for the rest of our benefits either increased only slightly or decreased.

What You Need To Know about 401(k) Tax Credits in 2017. Did you know that contributions to a 401(k) plan can be tax-deferred, enabling workers to reduce their taxable income **and** minimize their tax bill, according to an article in *Motley Fool*. 401(k) participants also qualify for the Retirement Savings Contributions Credit if their annual income does not exceed certain thresholds based on how they are filing their tax returns. **The 2017 amount of the credit** is 50%, 20% or 10% of your retirement plan or IRA contributions up to \$2,000 (\$4,000 if married filing jointly), depending on your adjusted gross income (reported on your Form 1040 or 1040A). Use the chart below to calculate your credit.

2017 Saver's Credit			
Credit Rate	Married Filing Jointly	Head of Household	All Other Filers*
50% of your contribution	AGI not more than \$37,000	AGI not more than \$27,750	AGI not more than \$18,500
20% of your contribution	\$37,001 - \$40,000	\$27,751 - \$30,000	\$18,501 - \$20,000
10% of your contribution	\$40,001 - \$62,000	\$30,001 - \$46,500	\$20,001 - \$31,000
0% of your contribution	more than \$62,000	more than \$46,500	more than \$31,000

Focus on Wellness-*contd. on page 6*

No time for the gym? Climb the stairs! When it is cold out and you don't have a gym membership or your exercise bike is "out of order," all is not lost. You can still get exercise if you have a second floor (or more) in your home or office. Climbing stairs can give you a good workout in very little time, according to a new study. Given that stairs inspired StairMaster exercise machines and their many derivatives, this should come as no surprise. Whereas previous research has looked at vigorous, steady stair climbing for up to 70 minutes a week, the new study looked at "sprint interval training" (SIT) on stairs, in which you alternate brief bursts of all-out exertion and short recovery



Long-time volunteer Pat Chan volunteering with clients in the reading nook.

Trish Talk, cont.

programs through their service at holiday parties, holding a carnival and many other educational and fun activities.

Last, but CERTAINLY not least, is Pat Chan. Pat has volunteered two days of every week since 2004 at the Wolstein Center. She spends one-on-one time with our adult clients and leads group activities of baking, cooking, crafts, reading and just fun conversation. She offers compassion and companionship to all and brightens the day of many!

From the bank president on our Board of Directors to Pat Chan, our one and only long-term dedicated individual volunteer – each brings their time, talent and treasure offering different but equal value to our agency and our clients. Please join me in thanking our volunteers during April and throughout the year. If you know of anyone interested in volunteering at UCP, please let me know at totter@ucpcleveland.org.

People FIRST Language

As we all know from working here at UCP of Greater Cleveland, people with disabilities are first and foremost people who have individual abilities, interests and needs. They are moms, dads, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, friends, neighbors, co-workers, students and teachers (to name a few). Their contributions enrich our communities as they live, work and share their lives.

The language a society uses to refer to persons with disabilities shapes its beliefs and ideas about them. Words are powerful; old, inaccurate and inappropriate descriptors perpetuate negative stereotypes and attitudinal barriers. When we describe people by their labels of diagnoses, we devalue and disrespect them as individuals. In contrast, using thoughtful terminology can foster positive attitudes about persons with disabilities. The appropriate manner of communicating with and about people with disabilities is "People First Language." People First Language emphasizes the person, not the disability. By placing the person first, the disability is no longer the primary, defining characteristic of an individual, but one of several aspects of the whole person. People First Language is an objective way of acknowledging, communicating and reporting on disabilities. It eliminates generalizations and stereotypes by focusing on the person rather than the disability.

Examples of People First Language include: "he/she has a disability;" "he/she uses a wheelchair;" "he/she has a developmental delay;" "he/she receives special education services;" "individuals without disabilities." These are just a few ways that People First Language can be utilized in everyday conversation, recognizing the disability is not the "problem," but rather one facet of an individual's life. Our words and the meanings we attach to them create attitudes, drive social policies and laws, influence our feelings and decisions and affect people's daily lives more and more. How we use our words make a difference. Adapted from www.thearc.org



2016 Employee of the Year!

Congratulations to Cindy Marks, who was named our 2016 Employee of the Year! Not only did Cindy plan and execute an amazing Halloween costume creation event for our youngest clients, but she also is a hard worker who puts passion and heart into being a LeafBridge therapist every single day! Cindy truly exemplifies our agency values and goes above and beyond for clients!

Thank You!

Agency Highlights (cont.)

OakLeaf Homes (Edendale and Memphis). *Memphis House* welcomes Lisamarie Bounds, their new LPN. As Lisamarie continues to build relationships with the clients and staff, the transition continues to evolve. Two clients, John and Paul, celebrated birthdays in January and in February, respectively. It was no surprise when they both wanted ice cream cakes for their birthdays. Brandon is transitioning out of Memphis and into a smaller home setting better suited for his needs. He will be missed but are happy for him to make this move to greater independence. Memphis continues to strive to accomplish many more things in the next few months as they continue to build their home environment. *Edendale House*. Dale K. will be celebrating a significant 60+ birthday in March! Dale has been at Edendale since 1991 and was one of the first residents in the home. The Edendale DSPs were saddened to lose one of their clients, Ron J., who passed away recently. We did welcome a new client, Michael L. to the home at the beginning of March. He is a 26 year old who likes being involved in his community. Michael is working toward obtaining employment in an office setting and would love to follow in his father's footsteps. He enjoys playing video games, bowling, reading, movies, watching videos and likes to listen to music. The Edendale staff is very happy to have him on board.



OakLeaf Partners. The new year has brought many exciting changes to OakLeaf Partners. Supported Employment clients have begun to focus on their dream jobs and what steps they need to take to achieve their goals. We call this process career exploration, and many clients have taken advantage of the service. Through career exploration, three of our SE clients have realized their potential and have been offered competitive employment with higher wages and additional responsibilities. Our clients' successes have motivated others to step out of their comfort zone and consider bigger and better opportunities. OakLeaf Partners is excited about the momentum the clients are gaining.

Transition Services (Project SEARCH). The Transition Services team has been working on their second round of family involvement meetings in April for Project SEARCH interns. They have invited representatives from Services for Independent Living and OOD to present. Oakleaf Partners, LCCC and the Educational Service Center of Lorain County will be hosting the bi-annual Project SEARCH meeting for the State of Ohio and Western Pennsylvania on April 7th. It will be an all-day affair and they are very proud to be hosting. UCP's Transition Services program has grown exponentially and as a result of this growth, a new position was added to assist with program efficiencies and coordination of services across four counties. Congratulations to Andy Kruse who was promoted to the new position of Transition Services Coordinator. Westfield Insurance in Medina is our newest site moving UCP into Medina County. The Lakeland Community College Project SEARCH team had an overnight trip to Columbus in February where they met with other Project SEARCH groups from all around Ohio and engaged in workshops to learn valuable new job skills. All of the Interns were really excited for this opportunity and adventure.

On March 8th OakLeaf Partners hosted the **Connecting DisABILITY & Employment** business breakfast for approximately 100 employers to learn about the advantages of hiring individuals with disabilities. It was held at the Cleveland Metroparks Watershed Stewardship Center and Brian Zimmerman, CEO of the Cleveland Metroparks was the keynote speaker. After placing a record 88 individuals into competitive jobs in 2016, our placement team has had a fantastic start to 2017. As of mid-February, we have already had approximately 10 competitive job placements. UCP has an inspiring and awesome team!!

Development & Marketing: The 5k running season is almost upon us! UCP of Greater Cleveland's very own Race to Empower 5k and One-Mile Fun Run will be on Sunday, May 7th and we want to see as many employee teams as possible! Come out and join Team UCP for a fun morning of exercise, team building and client accomplishments. The largest program employee team will win a team party hosted by development. Employee registrations are due to Emily Hastings in Wolstein Office #213 by April 28th.

We want YOUR client stories! The Development & Marketing team wants to share all of the amazing work and client successes going on in our programs. If you have a great idea for a client success story, please share it with us! Ideas and pictures can be sent to Tammy Willet at twillet@ucpcleveland.org.



UCP OF GREATER CLEVELAND

10011 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44106

Phone: 216-791-8363

Fax: 216-721-3372

Email:

info@ucpcleveland.org

Agency Leadership Team

Trish Otter,
President & CEO

Colleen Bennett,
Director of Human
Resources

Beth Lucas,
Chief Operations
Officer

Ken Ross,
Director of Finance &
Administration

Paul Soprano,
Director of OakLeaf
Services

Intesar Taye,
Director of LeafBridge
Services

Tammy Willet,
Director of
Development &
Marketing



Focus on Wellness-contd.

periods. To test how SIT would work in a two-story home, researchers had a group of sedentary but otherwise healthy women do three 60-second bursts of climbing up and down a single flight of stairs over a 10-minute period (with warm-up, cool-down, and recovery periods). With just three of these 10-minute sessions a week, the women improved their cardiorespiratory fitness significantly. So if you think you don't



have time to exercise, think again. All you need are a flight (or more) of stairs. Source: *Brief Intense Stair Climbing Improves Cardiorespiratory Fitness.*

Birthdays - Happy Birthday to All of You!

April

Latanya Moore	4/4
Andy Kruse	4/6
Patricia Koehl	4/6
Nicole Booker	4/8
Eric Hibinger	4/9
Chris Goodman	4/13
Paul Soprano	4/14
Anita MacGregor	4/15
Michelle Roundtree	4/18
Jordan Puls	4/18
Katherine Lowery	4/25
Alice Jenkins	4/27
Heather Hoffman	4/27
Sarah McDermott	4/29

May

Lakesha Porch
Dora Childers
Khawanda Ewing
Vera Teresa Schneider
Shardae Perry
Renee White
Wesley Fisher
Austin Graham
Tiffany Straub
Kayla Teague
Ryan Dew
Chanel Cheatwood
Russell Novotny
Teresita Santiago
Tameka Jackson
Shanice Williams
Ann Hopkins
Christine Mencini

June

5/1	Jamekia Cutwright	6/1
5/2	Trish Otter	6/1
5/6	Latonya Fluker	6/6
5/9	Miranda Dean	6/6
5/10	Rebecca Young	6/7
5/11	Allyson Coleman	6/8
5/12	Kelly Spears	6/9
5/18	Becky Ravas	6/10
5/18	Stefanie Koller	6/20
5/19	Shirelle Woodfolk	6/20
5/21	Tenika Philpotts	6/22
5/22	Shannon Hawthorne	6/23
5/22		
5/29		
5/31		
5/31		

Anniversaries - Congratulations and Thank You to All!

April

Julia Holder	2 Years
Raheem Merrit	9 Years
Kashina Minor	14 Years
Lora Onafuwa	3 Years
Becky Ravas	15 Years
Ken Ross	2 Years
Chanel Cheatwood	1 Year

May

Aziza Gray	4 Years
JacksonSeo	8 Years
Chris Stafford	8 Years
Vera Teresa Schneider	10 Years
Hester Brown	2 Years
Andrea Isaac	2 Years
Tranita McKenzie	2 Years
Stacie Stock	1 Year
Wesley Fisher	1 Year
Erin Maglio	1 Year
Chivon Booker	1 Year

June

Haley Berman	4 Years
Tom Donovan	28 Years
Tami Hanna	4 Years
Cynthia Marks	11 Years
George Neundorfer	6 Years
Intesar Taye	24 Years
Dominique Poindexter	3 Years
Khawanda Ewing	2 Years
Lateira Ivory	2 Years
Frances Sullivan	1 Year
Alicia Verhovitz	1 Year
Terri Morris	1 Year
Katherine Lowery	1 Year
Joshua Jackson	1 Year
Sylvia Carpenter	1 Year
Meagan Colquhoun	1 Year
Gabrielle Hawkins	1 Year
Tameka Jackson	1 Year
Ebony Robinson	1 Year

Please advise me at cbennett@ucpcleveland.org or at extension 1327 if you prefer to not have your birthday or anniversary listed in the newsletter.