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Volume 7 Issue 1

Trish Talk

Everyone talks about this as the “giving season.” I suggest that at UCP of Greater Cleveland, the entire year is “giving season.” All of you who have direct contact with our clients and their families are givers – givers of care, compassion, expertise.

When I attended Chanel High School’s recent Christmas party held for our LeafBridge families, one of the dads there told me of how they decided not to move out of town as they had planned to. They had been receiving services from a local large hospital’s therapy department and were told their daughter had developmental disabilities. She has a very rare genetic syndrome experienced by fewer than 150 babies born in the U.S. each year. When they learned of UCP’s clinic from another parent, they were amazed to hear our therapist, Laurene Sweet, talk about what their daughter CAN do and get into the details all the way down to his daughter’s tiny thumbs. They were hooked! They saw Laurene’s expertise and caring and decided that they could not leave Cleveland.

This story repeats throughout the agency on a regular basis. Thank you for giving of yourself and your hearts. Know that during this season of giving, you are a shining example. I wish you all a happy holiday season with hopes that you can be on the receiving end of the same love and support that you all offer others throughout the year.

Agency Highlights

OakLeaf Day Services (Wolstein, Westlake and Highland Hills) – Wolstein Day Services is pleased to announce that they are nearing full capacity! They are now serving 52 clients with one new client joining them in the new year!! Three of these new clients recently became residents of our two Group Homes in addition to becoming part of the Day Services program. Community integration continues in all of the Day Services locations. The Highland Hills location has partnered with the Warrensville Library for sensory story time activities. Librarian, JoAnna Schofield comes to Highland Hills twice a month and visits each of the four classrooms for interactive stories. In 2018, she will also host clients at the library for sensory story time once a month. Thank you to JoAnna and the Warrensville Library! Westlake also had an awesome year. Clients volunteered at the Book Bank, Westlake Library and Trinity Cathedral. Some of their outings included visits to the Zoo, Lake Farm Park, the Cleveland Automobile Show, and the Superman exhibit.



Agency Highlights (cont.)

Oakleaf Job Training (OJT): OJT was very happy to welcome a new client, Omunique, into their program this Fall. They would like to congratulate their OJT Production Assistant, Julia Holder on her promotion to Project Search Skills Trainer. Other changes include Richard Falconer taking over as the OJT Production Assistant and OJT Community Connector Tiffany Jackson being promoted to OJT Team Lead. The three Ronald McDonald House volunteers and their family members, OJT Staff, and OJT's Jesuit volunteer attended the Ronald McDonald House's Annual Volunteer Appreciation Brunch on November 4th. UCP was recognized for one full year of service to Ronald McDonald House. The Jesuit Volunteer has also been busy getting individuals physically fit through the Aquatic Program as well as helping individuals to participate in the community. Volunteer Pat Chan continues to work with some of the female clients in her "Girl Talk" group. Job Training has a new contract with Reese Pharmaceutical which should keep the clients busy through January. Three OJT clients have been volunteering weekly at Devon Oaks and The Renaissance Nursing Facilities. They are also excited to announce that a group of OJT clients have launched their Podcast Project with the assistance of David Modic, AT Specialist and Amy Vedova, Activities and Training Manager.



OakLeaf Partners/Transition Services: The OakLeaf Partners program continues to be a major resource for individuals interested in job opportunities. In October, the Group Employment Oatey Site added a new addition to their team. Prior to achieving employment at Oatey, the new employee successfully completed an assessment there during the month of September. Another individual started a situational assessment at Oatey recently. She is displaying very good work skills and may be a suitable candidate to fill the last opening at Oatey. The potential addition will bring a total of 24 individuals working at Oatey. OakLeaf Partners look forward to the new year and development of new prospects for the individuals we serve. The job placement goal for the Job Placement Specialists this year was 106 and they are pleased to announce that they have exceeded their goal by placing 109 clients as of December 14th. They are excited to have added Chris Coon to their Job Placement Specialists group in June and Sophia Loferski in September. Both have been great additions with their knowledge, background and



experience. The client holiday party was held this month which was a special time for the clients that they serve. Transition Services is happy to welcome Marlene Cioffi and Julia Holder to Project SEARCH. Marlene is a new Skills Trainer at Lakeland Community College and Julia has moved from OJT to Project SEARCH at University Hospitals Parma Medical Center. Many of the Project SEARCH sites hosted Colleen Bennett, UCP's HR Director for mock interviews and presentations on "Effective Interviewing Techniques" during their workshop weeks. Interns have now begun their second 10-week internship. The Transitional Services program is excited to announce that Mercy Regional Hospital, Lorain County

Community College, Westfield Insurance Group and Lakeland Community College have met their employment goals for the class of 2017! Currently the transition team is gearing up for Open Houses for the class of 2019 and planning for Summer Youth Work Experience and Career Exploration.

Agency Highlights (cont.)

OakLeaf Group Homes (Edendale and Memphis): The Group Homes had a joint Christmas party at St. Joseph Church in Brecksville on December 15th where everyone will engulfed themselves in fun, food and laughter. We had two new additions to the Edendale home in December. Philip is a 52-year-old male who loves interaction with his mom. Some of his interests include sports, swimming, swings and shopping in the community. Edendale's other new client is Shamus who they are sure will quickly integrate into Edendale's busy lifestyle. Sheila is the third new client who is now residing at the Memphis House and is already joining in the fun there. Both Group Homes hope to make the transition a seamless one for all of their new clients. Edendale plans to start a tradition during Christmas time to have an activity to complete together. They will be counting down seven days until Christmas with making gingerbread houses, baking cookies, table top games, gift wrapping, sending out Christmas cards to family, popping popcorn and trimming the tree.

LeafBridge Services: LeafBridge wants to welcome their new OT, Jessica Klonek, welcome back Rebecca Guenther from her leave, and send congratulations to Caitlin Kurilko on the arrival of her baby boy. Their school-based therapy team had a very good start to the new school year. They are currently serving over 500 students who have a variety of needs. 76 clients were served in their Steps to Independence this year so far. Children and young adults worked hard physically and mentally to achieve goals such as to stand, sit, walk, talk and dress themselves. The traditional therapy program has served over 215 children and adults this year.



LeafBridge Services hosted its second annual Halloween costume-making event on Wednesday, October 25th. The event is designed for children with disabilities who use wheelchairs, providing them with a costume especially crafted to incorporate their wheelchair. More than 60 LeafBridge staff and volunteers joined together to create costumes for 19 children just in time for Halloween Trick or Treating. Volunteers included firefighters from Elyria Local 474 and Cleveland Local 93/ Engine 10 as well as CSU Occupational Therapy students. Materials for the "costumes" were donated by local Home Depot stores and Kathy Koehl at Dorn Color Company. Food for the event was donated by John Zidian Company/Gia Russa. The 51st Annual Chanel Holiday Party was hosted and sponsored by the St. Peter Chanel Foundation. 180 clients and their siblings enjoyed an amazing day of fun and joy. The children participated in decorating cookies, face painting, arts and crafts activities and, of course, visiting Santa and Mrs. Claus who delivered gifts for all of the clients and their siblings.



Agency Highlights (cont.)

Development: The Development Team is looking forward to a spectacular 2018! The major fundraising events are scheduled, so be sure to mark them on your calendars:

- Race to Empower – Sunday, May 6, 2018
- Tee Up for UCP Golf Outing – Monday, June 4, 2018
- Puttin' on the Ritz Gala – Saturday, September 15, 2018

A big part of the Development Department's work is sharing success stories of our clients and staff. Be sure to save the UCP of Greater Cleveland Blog as a favorite on your browser and check back often! You can find weekly blog posts at: <https://www.ucpcleveland.org/blog>. This week features a charming story about Josie and highlights the outstanding staff expertise that can be found in our LeafBridge Therapy Services. Please check in often on social

Stay Connected:



media to find client and employee pictures, success stories and news of interest on our social media pages. You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube with /ucpcleveland or @ucpcleveland. We would also like to extend a BIG thank you to all of the UCP employees who supported the agency's fundraising efforts this year through giving of their time, talents and treasure. We are proud to support YOU and the work of the agency and the clients we serve.

HR News and Notes

Congratulations to our Employee of the Month (EOTM) Winners:

- **September** – Gabrielle Hawkins, Project Search Skills Trainer
- **October** – Sarah McDermott, Job Coach
- **November** – Tiffany Jackson, OJT Team Lead

We are always very pleased to shine the spotlight on our incredible employees who work hard every day to improve the lives of our clients. However, we value all our UCP staff who have worked tirelessly throughout this past year on behalf of our clients and their families. Thank you all!!

Walking Safety Tips: In October I sent an email with some walking safety tips which I would like to repeat here again now that we all generally arrive to work each morning in darkness and many of us leave in darkness as well. Not all of these walking tips will apply to all of our locations specifically, but take the suggestions and apply them to your location in terms of where you would go if you felt someone was following you or who you report any suspicious activity to if you see something suspicious.

- 1) If you see anyone suspicious that makes you feel uncomfortable as you are walking to your car at night, turn back and head toward your building or the nearest safe place. At the Wolstein Center, you can call the Cleveland Clinic Police (216-444-2250 for non-emergency and 216-444-2222 for an emergency). All other locations should call 911 for emergencies.
- 2) If you feel someone is following you, head toward a populated area as quickly as possible and call the local police department (the Cleveland Clinic Police at the Wolstein Center). Do not head toward your car where you can get cornered alone.

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HR News and Notes (cont.)

- 3) Always stay alert and do not talk on your phone or listen to music with headphones on while you are walking as this will distract you and make you an easier target. However, keep your phone in your hand so you would not have to search for it if needed to call for help. You can also call the Cleveland Clinic Police to escort you to your car from the Wolstein Center if you feel unsafe at 216-444-2250.
- 4) Keep your keys (or key fob) in your hand so you won't have to search for them when you arrive at your vehicle. You may want to purchase an inexpensive whistle to keep on your keychain to let others know if something is wrong and the loud noise may deter potential attackers.
- 5) If you did not contact the local police department, be sure to report anything suspicious or out of the ordinary to your supervisor or to HR so we can make the local authorities' security aware of the situation.
- 6) When entering a parking lot, look at the cars parked on either side of your vehicle. If someone in a vehicle is sitting alone in the seat nearest your car, or if you are parked next to an unfamiliar van, always enter your car from the side opposite the strange vehicle. If the parking lot is particularly dark or deserted, it may be wise to go back and call for an escort or to walk to your car with a co-worker. You should always lock your door immediately after entering your vehicle.



Employee Spotlight



Robin Cornett just joined UCP in October of this year as the Westlake Day Services Supervisor. She comes to us with a wealth of experience and was an ICF Manager at RoseMary Center for 11 years. Robin said she loves working with our clients because she knows it has a positive impact on their lives and their loved ones' lives every single day! She has been married to Anthony for 11 years and has a daughter, Carli-Ann. She loves to walk for exercise and she MUST go to at least one concert a year for her music "fix." She has an identical twin sister who is often mistaken for her. I bet they had a lot of fun fooling their parents and friends when they were younger! Robin is very excited because she is going to take her first "real" vacation which is a cruise to Punta Cana this coming spring. Have a great time, Robin and welcome to UCP!!!

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Paul Soprano,
Director of OakLeaf
Services

Intesar Taye,
Director of
LeafBridge Services

Tammy Willet,
Director of
Development &
Marketing



Birthdays - Happy Birthday to All of You!

January

Maria Stearns	1/3
Pegg Milroy	1/10
JacQuetta Thomas	1/12
Tami Hanna	1/13
Amy Vedova	1/14
Alyssa Chandler	1/17
Ashley Reeves	1/18
Denise Edwards	1/22
Amanda Stohrer	1/22
Amber Beavers	1/23
Richard Falconer	1/27
Karen Thompson	1/28

February

Lateira Ivory	2/1
Michele McDuffie	2/2
Hester Brown	2/4
Matthew Natole	2/9
Valerie Kessler	2/16
Stacy Corona	2/16
Crystal Winters	2/17
Janell Clements	2/18
Sherita Hooven	2/23
Frances Sullivan	2/24
Christina Riley	2/25
Sharnina Lewis	2/25
Carrie Hau	2/25
Emily Hastings	2/27
William Jones	2/28
Ebony Robinson	2/29

March

Ericka Coleman	3/5
Tammy Willet	3/6
Mary McHale	3/6
Regina Jackson	3/7
Daneen Crawford	3/8
Caitlin Kurilko	3/8
Jesseka Bell	3/11
Dina Deal	3/14
Joseph Garvin	3/19
Charles Holley	3/19
Shanita Dozier	3/22
Indya Toler	3/23
Stephen Molchan	3/26
Gloria Lewis	3/29
Laurene Sweet	3/31
Jill Summers	3/31

Anniversaries - Congratulations and Thank You to All!

January

Lori McGowan	18 years
Crystal Winters	17 years
Angela Dawson	14 years
Carmen Martinez	14 years
Celia Chesnick	13 years
Raynetta Jenkins	13 years
Denise Edwards	8 years
Austin Graham	7 years
Kelly Spears	6 years
Katherine Adkins-Dix	4 years
Elisabeth Bullock	4 years
Janell Clements	4 years
Cynthia Ball	3 years
Brian Corrigan	2 years
Ronisha Sanford	2 years
Amanda Malone	2 years
Latora Young	2 years
Gloria Lewis	1 year
Teresita Santiago	1 year
Labert Christian	1 year
Christine Mencini	1 year

February

Sharon Meixner	15 years
Renee White	11 years
Rebecca Guenther	10 years
Donna Woods	8 years
Daneen Crawford	7 years
DeAnna Daniels	6 years
Anita MacGregor	4 years
Caitlin Kurilko	4 years
Ann Hopkins	3 years
Liz Wilson	3 years
Rebecca Young	3 years
Evgenia Tararova	2 years
Parrise Beckley	1 year

March

David Modic	12 years
Beth Lucas	10 years
Aretha Johnson	7 years
Colleen Bennett	6 years
Yatanya Cavor	6 years
Carrienne Raymond	6 years
Miranda Dean	5 years
Tenika Philpotts	2 years
Denise Ray	2 years
Stacy Corona	1 year

*Happy
Anniversary*

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