



INSIGHTS

Hire Ability Day Celebrates 10th Anniversary!

October 29th, 2013



On October 16th, 2013 nearly 300 employers, elected officials, and business leaders joined in the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of [Hire Ability Day](#) at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane, Washington. The Luncheon program, set in the elegant Pennington Ballroom, was sponsored by local Spokane Businesses and once again highlighted local employers sharing the benefit their companies have experienced from including people with disabilities in their workforce. The target audience for their messages were their peers, other area businesses in attendance that have yet to experience the values of investing in this diverse workforce.

Always the most popular feature of Hire Ability Day, the success stories of the individuals joining us this year certainly lived up to their predecessors. Both in their videos and their podium presentations they captured the audience with their abilities, desires, frankness and solid work ethic. (Click this link to view [Darrin's video](#) and/or [Bree's video](#))

Keynote Speaker for this year's event was Dave Shaffer, CEO/President DePaul Industries, headquartered in Portland, OR. During his tenure with DePaul Industries, Shaffer has driven sales growth, expanded services and strengthened

customer relationships. He has over 30 years of experience in business, including start-ups of successful food and tech companies, turnarounds of organizations that were experiencing financial difficulties, and implementation of improved accounting and financial reporting functions. Dave currently serves on the steering committee/inaugural board of [The New City Initiative](#). He previously served as Chairman of the Finance Committee of the [Education Research Institute](#) of the Northwest Food Processors Association, and as a member of the Board of the [Incight Foundation](#). Dave was named an Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year in 2012.

Business Co-chairs Andy Barrett, Executive Director of Berg Companies, and Chuck Faulkinberry, Resident District Manager for Sodexo, added a local perspective, bringing home the positive impact that their employees with disabilities have on their bottom line, company morale, marketing and expanding their customer base.

New to the celebration this year were video 'shout outs' from past keynote speakers for Hire Ability Day. The audience was treated to messages from Erin Riehle, co-founder of Project SEARCH in Cincinnati; Brian Kingsbury, District Manager for Safeway Corp.; Cary Griffin, Griffin, Hammis and Associates; and Neil Ramano, former Assistant Secretary of Labor, *Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)*.

It was a great day! Here are some comments.

"Best Hire Ability Day luncheon ever. Much improved video # very effective. Great keynote. As always, a high quality event.

Andy spoke for many when he called it his favorite event of the year.”

“It is always very inspiring! Excellent speakers each year too. I love to see the local community betting involved and helping to spread the word about helping our citizens of the community.”

Hire Ability Day is supported by Spokane County Community Services, agencies providing employment services for people with developmental disabilities, their families, and other community organizations. The event is made possible by generous sponsors including Kalispel Tribe and Northern Quest Casino, Avista, Berg Company, 14th and Grand Salon, Gonzaga University, Providence Health Care, Safeway, STCU, Sodexo and many other community organizations.

<http://www.hireabilityday.org>

By: Cathy Sacco

Washington and Oregon APSE Chapters Host The Pacific Northwest Employment Forum!

October 29th, 2013



Please join us for the Pacific NW Employment Forum November 14-15, 2013, in Portland OR. Thursday, November 14th will feature a Keynote & Town Hall Discussion with Dale Dileo - “The Time for Desegregation is Now”, and sessions about: Highlights from OR & WA APSE Chapters, The Importance of Employment with self-advocates John Calhoun (OR) & Eric Matthes (WA), and social activities. Friday, November 15th will include a Discussion on APSE’s role in National Public Policy with APSE President David Hoff and Ryley Newport, and sessions about: Regional School-to-Work Approaches, Moving Towards Integrated Employment, Employment Best

Practices, and Supporting Agency Cultural Change. The registration cost is \$40 for APSE members & self-advocates, \$75 for non-members, and \$15 for students. [Click here](#) for Registration. Also, book your hotel room (if applicable) by October 31st at the Courtyard Marriot to get the special OR APSE group rate – call 866-576-5620. PLEASE JOIN US!

AtWork! Celebrates 50 + Years of Service and Transformation

October 25th, 2013



Last year, AtWork!, celebrated its 50th year. In the early to mid-60s, its precursors Custom Industries (CI) and Community Enterprises of Issaquah (CEI), served people primarily in sheltered work settings, and have come a long way since! “In fact,” CEO Chris Brandt told us, “At CEI in the mid to late 70’s, Cheryl Green, fresh out of college, started supported employment and placing people into community jobs before anyone had even heard of the term ‘supported employment.’ She then spun that project off and created Eastside Employment Services as a stand-alone placement agency. I started here as the Chief Operating Officer in 1998 when CI and CEI merged into AtWork! We still had a strong emphasis on sheltered work and I left because of that about six years later. However, in 2006, the board decided it wanted AtWork! to transition from sheltered work to community placements and I returned as the CEO to lead the charge. I’m happy to add that we will stop serving any people in a sheltered workshop setting in December.

What has made us successful are the people with disabilities we serve and their jubilation in having a new opportunity, their courage to try something new, and their willingness

to stand up to anyone who was afraid or didn't believe they could do it, and boldly say they wanted to do this– that it was their turn for a real job. People who got community jobs would come back and tell others they loved their jobs. Then people in the shop would say, "I'm next!" This story happened over and over. Having a real, solid plan and communicating it to all stakeholders was also important, especially communicating with people who didn't support the change. I spent hours and hours for years speaking with people about the drawbacks, their fears of change, and asking them to let us at least try one new thing in the community. We worked with the community and businesses to get their buy-in too. We also were lucky enough to get a lot of training and technical assistance from some of the best trainers available to assist us and make it happen. That was huge.

We still have a long way to go. This year we've placed 50 people into jobs, placed 100% of our embedded transition student program students into jobs, and have placed participants people thought would never work. We are even getting recognition locally and nationally. But we still need to increase hours, work on maintenance of jobs, etc.. The exciting thing though is that we're part of a cutting edge of providers working on a new way to get people jobs, working with public sector employers, and working on the Microsoft project. We went from dabbling in the community employment movement to being one of its leaders. It feels good."

Trillium Reaches a Milestone – 30 Years!

October 23rd, 2013



On October 22, Trillium Employment Services held an Open House celebrating its 30 years serving people with developmental and

intellectual disabilities in Washington State. In fact, the first person they placed in August 1983 still works at Physio Control. For the celebration, three participants spoke, as did Nancy Backus, Deputy Mayor of Auburn and State Senator Joe Fain. "I think our success is due to our value of teamwork," said Executive Director Trish Borden. "We work very well together, ever since we started with a team of three and even now with 45 staff working in Clark, King, Kitsap, and Pierce Counties.

We band together for job development and job coaching, and in all our work have a tremendous amount of teamwork. I also think our focus on outcomes and always tracking our data and performance measures is valuable. Last year we more than doubled our placements to well over 100, and are on track to do the same this year. We support over 400 participants, 300 employers, and have ongoing relationships with over 2000 businesses we are working with to hire our participants. Another value we practice is training – we invest a lot in training our staff, doing internal training, and mentoring each other. We send 3-5 people through the Highline Certification Class every year, and they become mentors to others. We are a high performing team." Congratulations Trillium!

Morningside Turns 50!

October 22nd, 2013



Morningside is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year! WISE caught up with Jim Larson, President/CEO, for a chat about this major accomplishment. "What is crucial about Morningside," Jim said, "Is that our philosophy and approach is to listen to our clients and see ourselves in that context as their peers, to treat them with respect, to honor their choices, and to really find out what they want for their lives. That is what we are all about.

Morningside's innovation and client-focus are what brought me here 24 years ago.

Morningside's only service then was a sheltered workshop, and I spoke with Jane Boone the county DD coordinator in Thurston County about wanting something different, to explore offering individual supported employment. She inspired us to begin placing people in jobs in the community from our workshop. Our board of directors meeting in 1990 put the stamp of approval on it when they said, "Let's 'Just Do It!' And then when funding for transition students came through the Legislature, we were awarded the local contract which only allowed community placements. What really made us close our workshop was that we used David Mank from the University of Oregon to survey our clients and he found that 80% of them wanted jobs in the community. They really drove the five year plan "Bridge to the Community" to close the sheltered workshop and we held a community celebration at the conclusion. Our next move is to close our group supported employment program by the end of 2014." When asked what the essence of Morningside is, and their key to success throughout the years, Mr. Larson responded, "Our passion is to support people so that they can and do live and work in the community. That's why we are still here."

[Click here](#) to read an Editorial written for the 50th Anniversary

[Click here](#) to read the 50th Anniversary Report to the Community

<http://www.mside.org/>

Partners For Work Recognition Event, Hard Rock Cafe, Seattle, October 8, 2013

October 21st, 2013



Partners For Work hosted our first Frank Devlyn Award Reception this month. The Covington, Snoqualmie, Redmond Rousers and Issaquah Rotary clubs were honored for their commitment and contribution to create meaningful employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities. We recognized and acknowledged King County Executive Dow Constantine for his unwavering commitment and support. Five King County employers that have hired through Partners For Work shared their positive experiences. Rotary Club Greeters joined us and talked about why their positions are important to them. Hard Rock Café Prep Cook Matthew assisted with the program, welcomed everyone to the Café, presented Dow Constantine his gift and has celebrated over a year of employment, another successful PFW employee! Rotarians, County staff, support agency personnel and PFW participants filled the room to celebrate the first three years of successful outcomes in this collaborative King County Project.

Clark County Businesses and Citizens Honored for Commitment to Employment & Services for People with Developmental Disabilities

October 17th, 2013



Vancouver, WA – New Seasons Market at Fisher’s Landing, Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and Jay Warden Yard Maintenance were among the businesses and people honored recently by the Clark County Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board. They were recognized during the 12th annual awards ceremony honoring employers and citizens who have supported people with developmental disabilities and employees with disabilities who help forge a dynamic, productive workforce.

The awards and winners were:

- Private Employer of the Year - New Seasons Market at Fisher’s Landing, for outstanding commitment to hiring people with developmental disabilities.
- Public Employer of the Year – Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, for its many years of employing people with developmental disabilities.
- Employee of the Year – Gavin Hansen, an 11-year employee of Heathman Lodge.
- Exceptional Achievement Award – Jay Warden of Jay Warden Yard Maintenance, for running his own business since 2004.
- Dennis Campbell Outstanding Service Award – Darla Helt of the Arc of Southwest Washington, for many years of selfless service and commitment to improving the lives of children and adults with developmental disabilities.

The event was sponsored by New Seasons Market, the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce and the Clark County Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board.

“Inclusion Works”: Northwest Center Invites Employers to See for Themselves.

October 11th, 2013



*(Re-blogged from the West Seattle Blog)
(Photo courtesy Northwest Center)*

That’s Scott , one of two people working at West Seattle’s [Pacific Rim Equipment Rental](#) thanks in part to job coaches from [Northwest Center](#) . The South Park-headquartered nonprofit is known for its own inclusive workforce, but you might not realize it helps match other companies with dedicated workers who also happen to be people with disabilities. In honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month , over the next eight days, NW Center is offering two chances for local businesspeople to come tour its headquarters and see for themselves how “Inclusion Works” – NW Center’s theme for this month. The “People of All Abilities Tours” are free, first one 12:15-1:15 pm today, second one next Thursday (October 17th) 9-10 am, both at 7272 West Marginal Way South – but you need to RSVP by contacting Hilary Anderson ASAP, 206-378-6372 or handerson@nwcenter.org .
