

CREATING HOPE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE SYSTEM OF SERVICES

NOVEMBER 2009

OCCUPATIONS • FAMILY EMPOWERMENT COUNCIL • NEW DYNAMICS CORP • McQUADE CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Brunch celebrates achievements



Liam Manak

On Sunday, October 4th, Occupations Foundation, Inc. hosted a celebration brunch at Anthony's Pier 9 in recognition of Governor Paterson's recent proclamation declaring October as Hudson Valley Disability Awareness Month. More than 200 people gathered to celebrate outstanding achievements of some of the individuals in the agencies' communities.

Those honored for outstanding achievements were:

- Harvey Rosenthal, Executive Director of the New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, Inc.
- Donna Ponessa, Nurse Evaluator for Westchester Independent Living Center's Nursing Home Transition and Diversion (NHTD) Waiver Program
- 15-year-old Liam Manak from the Town of Greenville
- Frances Hoffman of Newburgh
- Participants in the Personalized Recovery Orientated Services (PROS) program of Occupations, Inc.

The awards were presented by Chris Ashman, Orange County Commissioner of Mental Health and Jacklyn E. Spring, Hudson Valley Developmental Disabilities Services Deputy Director of Support Services.

Award recipient, Donna Ponessa, commented, "My goal is to live life to its fullest. I won't allow my disability to define who I am. I can't get caught up in the semantics of whether or not I'm a person with a disability, a wheelchair user, ventilator dependent, and MS'er. Please just call me Donna."

Occupations Foundation partnered with Provident Bank as Brunch Sponsor, and several other community organizations and leaders to sponsor the elegant event. James W. Taylor, Jr., President of Taylor Recycling Facility, chaired the fundraising initiative. Graham M. Skea served as honorary chair.

"This is truly one of the most inspirational events I have ever attended. The individuals honored are true examples of courage, self determination, and hope. We are blessed to have such a dynamic System of Services in our community to help people with disabilities live independently and achieve their goals," commented Graham Skea.

Funds raised through this special event enable the Foundation to further support Occupations' capital project for renovations at 21 and 23 Grand Street in the City of Newburgh. The plans clearly support services that are essential to addressing mental health and child welfare needs of the children, families and adults living in this high-needs community.

This newsletter will further illustrate outstanding achievements of those honored at the Brunch, and further outstanding achievements of some of the individuals receiving assistance and services through the System of Services.



*Frances Hoffman (left),
Amy Anderson-Winchell
& Chris Ashman*



*Donna Ponessa
(right) and Jackie Spring*

TOGETHER IS BETTER

Dear Friends & Colleagues . . .

Our System of Services is passionate about helping people live healthy and satisfying lives. We strive to empower and inspire each person to pursue their vision for the future. We're committed to changing lives and creating opportunities in which all people have real choices supported by high quality services that result in their ability to live fully, enjoying all this community has to offer.

Last year, we introduced a dynamic collaboration of services — the joined forces of Occupations, Inc., Family Empowerment Council, Inc., and New Dynamics Corp. Today, through this collaboration, we have a passionate, professional team of more than 1,100 full and part-time staff, five corporations, and over 44 committed volunteer board members. We work hard to help those with special challenges reach their full potential. What we are most proud of is how we make differences in the lives we touch by instilling hope and resiliency. Our work is about relationships we have with people who have shown us the true power of the human spirit.

In March 2009, Occupations, Inc. entered into a management consultant agreement with McQuade Children's Services, in a joint effort to enable McQuade to continue to support the community and provide services to children and families. Through active participation with the individuals and families we serve, sister agencies and government, we are able to meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities, those living with mental illness, people with physical disabilities, and the economically disadvantaged. We are inspired by the enriched quality and diversity of our services.

We value highly the commitment demonstrated by the Boards of Directors, staff members, and the people we serve to create positive and meaningful change. Our values and experiences create the demand for ongoing adjustments as we strive for consistent quality improvement in our services and the lives of the people we serve. We continue to demonstrate the commitment to sustaining growth, while consistently ensuring that this growth is grounded in our beliefs and values.

It is a privilege to be able to share with you, through this newsletter, the incredible accomplishments individuals have achieved in both their personal and professional lives — locally, regionally and nationally, through their own determination and with the help of the quality services made available to them by our System of Services.

We are grateful to everyone who supports our mission and services with their time, talent and financial donations. We look forward to continuing our work together to meet the needs of the individuals and families we serve.



James B. DeStefano



Amy Anderson-Winchell

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James B. DeStefano".

James B. DeStefano
President & Chief Executive Officer
Occupations, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Anderson-Winchell".

Amy Anderson-Winchell
Executive Director
Family Empowerment Council, Inc.
and
Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
Occupations, Inc.

SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Growth in the collaboration . . . **McQuade comes on board**



In a continued effort to support the community and provide services to children and families, Occupations, Inc., entered into a management consultant agreement with McQuade Children's Services in March 2009. James B. DeStefano, President & Chief Executive Officer of Occupations, Inc., and Amy Anderson-Winchell, L.C.S.W., Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer of Occupations, Inc., and Executive Director of Family Empowerment Council, Inc., are leading the team who are providing these management consultation services. McQuade's Interim Chief Executive Officer, Annamarie Appel, and Jake McHale, Director of Education at the Kaplan School for Special Education— together with the McQuade Children's Services Board — have welcomed the Occupations team and look forward to making a seamless transition as

McQuade continues to provide services to children and families in need from school districts and county social service departments throughout the region. "We are pleased to be able to provide support to this valuable community resource that has served children and youth for more than a hundred years," stated James DeStefano.

McQuade is a private, 501(c)3 non-profit with a nearly 150-year legacy of providing therapeutic residential care, special education, diagnostic shelter services, and community-based prevention programs to children with special needs each year. Services are provided through the Kaplan School for Special Education, a residential treatment center, and through community-based therapeutic group homes and preventive programs.

Local award received from OSCEAN

Occupations, Inc. was recognized by OSCEAN (*Orange & Sullivan County Employment Alliance Network*) with a Local Award for their leadership in workforce development and increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Occupations was nominated by three individuals who are employed as contract workers through Occupations' Industrial Operations.

Darnell Ray included these comments in his nomination: "I want to thank Occupations for giving me this job. I love my job at West Point very much. This is a good job. I get along with people in the building and my pay is above average. I get transportation, and my supervisor has trained me on-site to use machinery which makes me valuable. Occupations has changed my life." Derrick Nesbitt, contract worker, added, "I would not be able to have a job if Occupations didn't help me. They provide me with support and transportation."

OSCEAN is a consortium of non-profit and public human service agencies that partner to further employment for persons with disabilities. October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month, or "NDEAM", a federally-designated recognition as well as

an annual opportunity to recognize businesses (public or private) that have taken steps to improve diversity representation in their workplace. OSCEAN presented the award to Occupations, Inc., and awarded several other businesses with local and regional awards at its National Disability Employment Awareness Month Awards Ceremony and Breakfast on October 2nd.



Seated, left to right: Ellen Figura, Walter Pawlowski, Darnell Ray, Derrick Nesbitt
Standing, left to right: Maureen Piermarini, Guermo Tobar, Carole Young, Marylou Berardino

SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Together is Better!

The inaugural System-Wide Staff Recognition Celebration will take place on December 18th. In the spirit of these organizations joining to share one mission — to create hope and choice by assisting people with special challenges in their efforts to lead healthy, satisfying, productive and interdependent lives — staff, board members and guests will gather to celebrate the success, dedication and hard work of nearly 100 employees from our System of Services. Recognition will be given for 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service to the following individuals:

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Franklin Dyes, McQuade
Lester King, Occupations
Andrew Mills, Occupations
Lois D. Pearson, McQuade

20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Wendy Dehler-Cunningham, Occupations
William Jolly, Occupations
Marilyn Knoerzer, McQuade

15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Melissa Arenas-Dewitt, Occupations
Laverne Cozart, McQuade
Elaine Furman, Occupations
Rosemarie Greener, NDC
Joanie Mahoney, Occupations
Theresa Mihok, Occupations
Ginny-Ann Mott, Occupations
Naida Nieves, Occupations

15 YEARS OF SERVICE, continued

Naida Nieves, Occupations
Rosaura Ortiz, Occupations
Kathleen Shine, Occupations
Peggy Tobin, Occupations
Nerdzivane Useinoska, Occupations

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Rosalind Acree, McQuade
Marline Affronti, McQuade
Krystal Ancona, FEC
Darlene Bird, FEC
Carole Bradley Young, Occupations
Dorrel Christie, Occupations
Evelyn Cintron, Occupations
Barbara Conklin, Occupations
Moncerrate Delgado, Occupations
Sherry Dippolito, Occupations
Susan Donovan, McQuade

10 YEARS OF SERVICE, continued

Beverly Valle Farrow, FEC
Karen Fischer, McQuade
Darren Jones, NDC
Kim Kenna, Occupations
Thomas Lee, FEC
Robert Lobb, Occupations
Susan Manning, FEC
Paul McNerney, Occupations
Patricia Murphy, Occupations
Anthony Pennimpede, FEC
Marinao Santiago, McQuade
Julia Schembari, McQuade
Catherine Sellars, Occupations
Deirdre Sherman, Occupations
Karen Vaughan, FEC
Mary Wagers, FEC
Eric D. Walker, McQuade
Kathy White, FEC



Health & Wellness Committee

In July, 17 employees met to kick off our first system-wide Health and Wellness Committee. Lori Lentini, Vice President of Human Resources and Quality Assurance, served as the advisor. The committee supports, educates and encourages employees to take measures to help prevent the onset or worsening of a disease or illness, and to adapt lifestyles that are healthier. A wide range of Employee Wellness Programs have been implemented with many more planned for 2010. Our Wellness Program is an investment in our staff that supports their optimal physical and psychological health, in addition to being an effective tool to reduce the growth of their medical care costs in the future.

In 2009 over 275 staff participated in a bio-metrics screening which included a population health risk assessment component. We have also held 5K walks and salad bowl luncheons, and are planning our first Family Fun Sports event for early December. We look forward to a healthy 2010 as we enhance our atmosphere by supporting our employees with encouragement, opportunity, and incentives to part of our healthy culture.

Food, Coats & Toy Drive

This year's staff-supported holiday drive has gone system-wide. For a 10th year, Pat Murphy of Occupations' Case Management department is ably coordinating the activity. Staff members from Occupations, New Dynamics Corp, Family Empowerment Council and McQuade Children's Services are asked to donate a new, unwrapped toy, a 'gently used' coat, and/or non-perishable food items to support the individuals and families served through the System of Services.

Collection locations have been established throughout, and staff are working diligently to meet the needs of everyone possible. FEC has traditionally assembled food baskets during the holiday season for families in need. With the System of Services working together, they're hoping to be able to provide food baskets to *all* families who are in need.



SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Donation assists children with literacy



For over three years, Healthy Families of Occupations, Inc., and Child Welfare program participants have been recipients of a generous grant through First Books, that provides books to children ages birth to 5 to start their own libraries.

This grant is a perfect match for Healthy Families. It promotes early literacy and ties nicely into goals for

positive child development, healthy outcomes, and parent-child bonding. First Book's mission is to provide new books to children in need by addressing one of the most important factors affecting literacy — access to books.

These mini grants enable Healthy Families to provide children's books to all of our target children and their families. First Book has provided yearly grants to our Newburgh, Middletown and SAMHSA sites since their

inception in 2007. In the 2008 grant cycle, approximately 215 families received books through the First Book Grant and a total of 1,250 books were distributed.

Newburgh and Middletown Healthy Families conduct monthly Story Time Parenting Groups, focusing on promoting parent-child bonding, while supporting early literacy and the importance of structured routines in a young child's life. Activities include reading, singing, and acting out stories and songs to encourage parents to have fun with reading and to include the whole family. Reading together, using colorful materials and repetition, also supports brain development and critical language skills. Each child is able to take home a book, provided by the First Book Grant.

Healthy Families' staff of home visiting educators visit families in their homes and bring books for the children. Children participating in this program love receiving books of their own that they can keep. Many of these families have no resources available to purchase books of their own. Thanks to First Books, participating children have the chance to start a library of their very own - an opportunity they would not be likely to have otherwise.

Empire State Bank donates

Occupations Foundation, Inc., received a gift of \$1,000 from the Empire State Bank in support of Occupations Capital Campaign Project, "Revitalizing History and Hope", for the renovation of 21-23 Grand Street in Newburgh — the home of Family Counseling.

Pictured left to right: Philip Guarnieri (left) Empire's President, Wendi Chason, Occupations' Director of Development, and Anthony Costa, Empire's Board Chair.



\$20,000 received from KeyBank Foundation

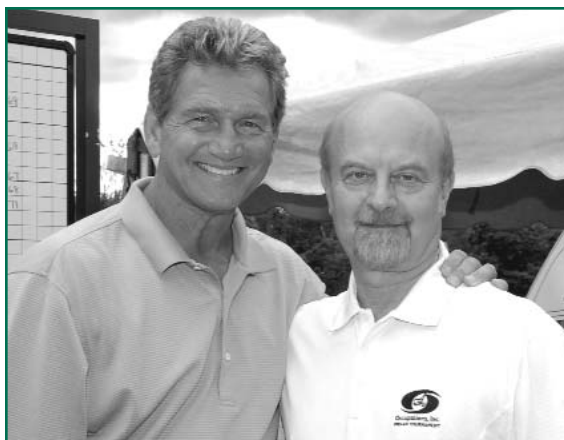


Occupations, Inc., is the recipient of a generous gift of \$20,000 from KeyBank Foundation. These funds will support Occupations' efforts to provide people with disabilities with marketable skills through productive jobs and wages that promote economic self sufficiency and diversity in the workplace through the New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc., (NYSID) program. Occupations, Inc., employs 48 people with disabilities through the NYSID program. Funding from KeyBank for this program helps to ensure that all 48 people served through the NYSID program are employed.

"KeyBank is proud to be a long-time supporter of Occupations, Inc. in their on-going service to the Community," commented Paul Calogerakis, senior vice president of KeyBank Corporate Banking (*pictured at left with Jim DeStefano*).

SYSTEM OF SERVICES

'09 Pro-Am drives in community support



Over 100 golfers and friends, some coming from the states of Virginia and Texas, joined 27 Regional Golf Pros on the greens at The Golf Club at Mansion Ridge in Monroe on June 19th in support of Occupations' Pro-Am Tournament. Event Co-Chairs, Fred Dana, Vice President of Dana Distributors, and Chuck Benfer, General Manager of Cumulus Broadcasting, welcomed back Mark Lye as the host of this fundraising event. Lye was joined by former Washington Redskins quarterback, Joe Theismann. Theismann and Lye entertained the crowd in the morning with a golf clinic where they shared some great golfing tips and humorous banter. The weather held out for a spectacular day of golfing on the links where sponsors and golfers gathered to help raise funds for Occupations, Inc.



Theismann also signed autographs, posed for photos with golfers, and took great pride in being able to help an organization like Occupations, Inc., raise funds. "There used to be a time in my life where I wanted things for myself. Now I've found out the power of being a celebrity is what you can give back," commented Theismann.



The team from Dana Distributors, took home the Pro-Am Cup Trophy. Defending champions from Laborers' Local 17 was the second low scoring team, and the foursome from Cumulus Media/WPDH was the third low scoring team. The winning golf professional was Jerry Famulare of the NY Golf Club in Tappan, New York.



The Occupations 2009 Pro-Am was sponsored in part by the Warwick Savings Foundation, WPDH, 94.3/97.3 The Wolf, Dana Distributors, Johnstons Toyota, USI Insurance, Relph Benefit Advisors, E&A Contracting of Orange County and Safina Office Products.

Photos:

Top: Former Washington Redskins quarterback, Joe Theismann (left) with Occupations' CEO, Jim DeStefano

Center: Joe Theismann and Mark Lye provide golf tips and humor prior to the shotgun start of the 2009 Pro-Am.

Bottom: The winning team from Dana Distributors, who took home the Pro-Am Cup Trophy.

Warwick Savings Foundation

Occupations Foundation was the recipient of a \$20,000 donation from Warwick Savings Foundation. The Warwick Savings Foundation began their support of Occupations, Inc. back with the Skins Game 11 years ago, and since then has contributed over \$200,000 in support of this event.

The Warwick foursome (left to right): John McDermott, Foundation board chair, Michael Kennedy Mary Smith and Debra Kennedy.



SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Quality Improvement

Occupations is committed to improving the physical health of the people we serve as well as addressing their emotional and mental health issues. For the past 4 years, Occupations' clinics have been participating in the OMH (Office of Mental Health) Quality Improvement Initiative. This year, the mental health clinics began to use a project called Psyckes — an on-line report developed by OMH to support quality care for mental health service recipients by improving the quality and safety of their medication treatments. Clinics and doctors can use Psyckes to see if a patient's medication treatment needs a quality review. Once a review is conducted, the doctor and individual can determine if any changes are needed. Occupations will be continuing with the Psckes project and continues to work with OMH to collect data and move toward more effective, safer medication treatments. For more information about Psyckes, visit <http://www.psyckes.org>.



OPTS Committee reviews outcomes

The OPTS (Options for People Through Service) Pilot Evaluation Committee serves to review measurable outcomes to ensure that quality services are being provided to individuals enrolled in OPTS residential services. The committee is comprised of consumers from the numerous homes, family members, residential program directors, direct support staff and members of our Quality Assurance team.

Every six months surveys are sent out to both consumers and their families. Once tabulated, results are reviewed highlighting areas with the lowest scores. Activities to enhance individual outcomes or strategies for retaining staff, for example, are discussed by the committee. "Task" reports are then sent out to program directors, site supervisors and human resources with constructive feedback designed to challenge and inspire further improvements.

The June '09 family surveys reflected 83% of families were satisfied with the services being provided for their loved ones. The consumer surveys indicated a 98% satisfaction rate with their quality of life. Outcomes

currently measured include community inclusion, working and volunteering based on personal goals and desires, quality of life in the home, staff retention and skills, personal and family satisfaction. Exceptional strides were made in individuals becoming involved in their community through working and/or volunteering. For example: an individual had not worked in over 4 years and is now successfully employed part-time at Price Chopper. Another individual had never worked in the community and is now volunteering in the nursery at church every Sunday. Two individuals who had never worked in the community before have enrolled in a pre-vocational program. A committed volunteer has added yet another day to his already busy schedule to assist at a local food pantry. Others have volunteered, greeted people at their church, become honorary members of their local fire departments, cleaned parks and held toy/coat drives.

The OPTS Evaluation Committee will meet again in December 2009 and looks forward to learning about accomplishments over the past 6 months.



Bike tour is 20 years strong!

On Sunday, October 4th, McQuade Children's Services held its 20th Annual Fall Foliage Bike Tour, raising over \$15 thousand for the non-profit organization. Over 400 cyclists from around the tri-state area participated in the event that offered trails ranging from 15 to 50 miles, beginning and ending at the Brotherhood Winery in Washingtonville.

"This year's event was a true representation of what is possible when people join together for a good cause," said Pamela Kelly-Day, Board Chair of McQuade Children's Services. "We were able to raise money and awareness to support McQuade in providing for children and their families. I am truly grateful for the continued support of all who participated," Kelly-Day said.

Many community businesses and volunteers donated their time, money and service to help raise funds for the programs and services of McQuade, helping it to be a resounding success.

MEET FRANCES, DONNA, LIAM & HARVEY — SHINING



Confidence & determination . . . that's her credo

Frances was diagnosed with a mental illness at the age of 31. As a result, Frances had difficulty finding employment. In order to deal with coping issues, Frances reached out to the Occupations Squire Center in New Windsor for group therapy.

From there she was encouraged to go to VESID so that they could assist her in returning to college and to earn her degree. She eventually graduated from Orange County Community College in 2000 with an A.S. degree.

Lacking the confidence to apply for jobs for which she was trained, Frances did small odd jobs. She also volunteered at Hudson House who referred her to seek assistance through AARP and Rural Opportunities for their Senior Citizens Employment program. Frances was placed in a two-year job training with Hudson House.

Frances began as a consumer in the New Windsor Work Center in 2006. While there, she developed her skills and confidence and eventually wanted to earn more money. In less than a year, she applied for the position of Pieceworker in the same work center and was hired. Frances worked consistently and accurately on piece-work and quality control. One year later a position became available for Production Supervisor. Because of excellent skills and work ethic, Frances was encouraged by her counselor to apply for the position. Frances was enjoying her job and liked the prospect of doing more to help others — just as so many people had helped her. In July 2007, Frances applied and was hired as Production Supervisor. She is a valued team member and is now helping others with mental disabilities, achieve their goals.

Super advocate and creative, competitive athlete

Donna Ponessa had no idea her destiny would include being an advocate for people with disabilities and working passionately to assist them in achieving a quality of life on their own terms. Her goal in



working with and motivating people with disabilities is so that they, like her, can't wait until morning to open their eyes, get out of bed and start a new day.

Being fiercely competitive in slalom skiing, equestrian events and swimming, she couldn't imagine the effects a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in her junior year of college would have on her personal life and professional career. Being relatively without symptoms after graduating college, she began as a floor nurse at St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital, St. Luke's campus before marrying her college sweetheart and moving to Middletown where she and her husband were busy pursuing the 'American dream'. She assumed a position as charge nurse of a surgical ICU and fulfilled a lifelong dream of owning her own horse. They settled into a nice house, acquired a Doberman, drove fast cars and took yearly vacations. Life was good.

With the onset of MS Donna was forced to leave her job as an ICU nurse, admit that she needed a wheelchair for mobility, and sell her beloved horse. The marriage came to an end. Foundering with this sense of loss and despair, she looked for other avenues to channel her competitiveness and began playing wheelchair basketball. In the mid 1980s Donna took an advocacy job with Westchester Independent Living, Inc. She finally found a place to work that espoused people with disabilities were people first, and entitled to have a self-defined quality of life. Liking wheelchair basketball to demolition derby with a ball, she turned her interest to wheelchair tennis. By the late 80s she was the number 2 player in the nation and one of the top players in the world. She received notoriety by having the only 2-handed backhand in the game; a distinction she still holds today. In 1991 Donna was the 1st female player to be awarded Player of the Year and Sportsperson of the Year by the US Wheelchair Tennis Foundation. She had the privilege of being invited to third world countries to introduce the sport to them. She was also featured on CBS Night Watch and made a public service announcement for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

In 1988 Donna became the executive director of the Western Orange County Center for Independent Living, Inc. (now Action Towards Independence) and served in that capacity until a severe flare-up of the disease forced a long 20 month stint at Orange Regional Medical Center and then Helen Hayes Hospital. Now a ventilator-dependent quadriplegic, she fought to return to her home and not be sent to an out-of-state nursing home after being discharged from the hospital in 1992.

Donna returned to the workforce in August 1994 at Independent Living, Inc. in Newburgh. Along the way, she got another dog, served on the Governor's Committee on Accessible transportation, was awarded the Frank G.

EXAMPLES OF HOW TO LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST!

Masterson Public Service Award, achievement awards from the Rockland ILC and the NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. In 2003 she received the NYS Senate Achiever's Award. In 2007, she was honored by the agency she worked for by receiving the "Spirit of Independence Award" by Independent Living, Inc.

Given her fierce conviction that people with disabilities should be allowed to live in the community of their choice and her desire to use her experience as an RN, she returned to work at Westchester Independent Living, Inc. in 2008 as a nurse evaluator for the Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Waiver; a Medicaid funded program that offers supports and services that allow people to live in their home. Vowing that if she could get off the ventilator long enough to ride horses, she would once again pursue the sport. In March of 2007 she began taking riding lessons with a local trainer and her passion for the horse was rekindled. Thinking that horse ownership was not even a remote possibility, that notion was shattered in October 2007 when she adopted a retired racehorse named Belle of the Ball.

Donna's personal philosophy on living with a disability is simple: she doesn't want to be pitied or defined by it. She can't get caught up with the semantics of whether she is a person with a disability, an MS'er, a wheelchair user or ventilator dependent. Instead, she prefers to be called "Donna". She is a firm believer that disability is not a transgression and those who have a disability don't have to spend the rest of their lives working to overcome it.



Watch the fashion runways for Liam's creations!

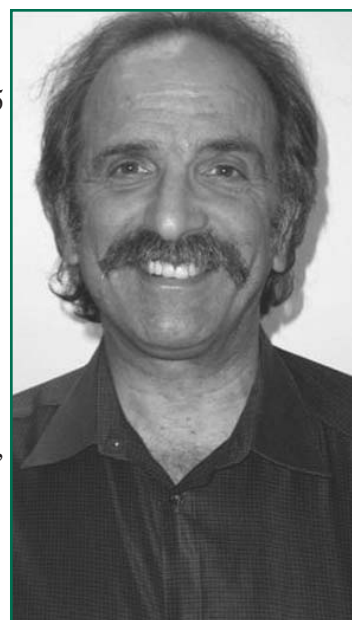
Liam Manak is a 15-year-old boy diagnosed on the autism spectrum. For the last few years, Liam attended a BOCES annex, with his goal being to re-enter his local high school. Liam achieved that goal. He's now a proud freshman at Minisink Valley High School and is doing great. Liam is a part of the drama club and looks forward to joining other school programs. He loves the fact that he is now "included", after a battle with trying to

fit in and feel a sense of belonging. Liam has worked through many challenges and now puts his emotions and feeling into his works of art. Liam's passion is fashion! This inspiring young man designs clothing with a knack for design and a great eye.

Liam is a strong-willed young man who has overcome many issues within his young life. With great love and support from his parents, sister and brother, and other family members, Liam continues to pursue his goals and dreams. He's an example to all of us that, "If you believe it, you can do it. Put your great effort into everything you do and great things will come your way."

Champion for people with mental health challenges

Harvey Rosenthal has over 35 years' experience working to provide or support public mental health services and social policies that promote the recovery, rehabilitation and rights of people with psychiatric disabilities. For almost 20 years, he served in a variety of community mental health service settings, including inpatient and outpatient treatment, case management, residential, forensic, emergency and rehabilitation settings.



He is past president of the New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services (NYAPRS) and, since 1993, has been its first Executive Director. In this role, Harvey has helped lead numerous successful advocacy coalitions in achieving the passage of Medicaid Buy-In legislation, the MTA Half-Fare Fairness Act, the Community Reinvestment Act, Timothy's Law, Mental Health Alternatives to Solitary Confinement legislation, and Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council legislation, as well as increases/restorations of funding for numerous services and entitlements for New Yorkers with psychiatric and related disabilities. Harvey has also worked tirelessly to promote the expansion of recovery centered services, peer support and employment initiatives and to expand informed choice protections and open access to a broad range of mental health, health and a variety of public services. Harvey's interest in promoting mental health recovery is also personal, dating back to his own hospitalization at age 19.

SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Excellence in service coordination

Family Empowerment provides diverse service coordination for children and adults. Service coordinators help assess needs, develop a plan and implement that plan by accessing needed services.

Medicaid Service Coordination for people with developmental disabilities, such as mental retardation, cerebral palsy, autism, seizure disorder and muscular dystrophy through OMRDD. The service coordinator helps develop and implement a person-centered individualized service plan.

Family Support Service Coordination for people with developmental disabilities living at home with their families who are not eligible for Medicaid. The service coordinator advocates, refers and links people to needed services.

Transition Family Assistance – service coordination for children with disabilities transitioning from pre-school to kindergarten, with a focus on addressing challenging behaviors. The service coordinator works with the family and an educational advocate consultant to educate the family in the special education system and ensuring an appropriate educational plan. Community referral and linkage is also provided.

Care at Home Case Management - The Care at Home Waiver is for children ages birth to eighteen years who are medically fragile and technology dependent, but can safely be cared for at home with extra supports in place. The parents' income may be waived for the child to access Medicaid. Waiver services include case management, skilled respite, environmental modifications and assistive technology.

EI Ongoing Service Coordination - The Early Intervention Program provides services for children from birth to age three who have delays in one or more areas. It is a family training model in which professionals, such as physical and speech therapists, come into the home and work with caregivers to teach ways to work with their child. FEC can coordinate services for children who receive services from both Early Intervention and the OMRDD Waiver or Care.

TBI Service Coordination - The DOH Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver is for adults, 18 to 64 years of age, who have a brain injury, are eligible for Medicaid and meet a nursing home level of care. A plan of services is developed to allow the individual to live safely in the community with supports. Some of the supports and services provided by the waiver include environmental modifications, independent living skills training, home and community support services, behavioral interventions, structured day program and community integration counseling.

NHTD Service Coordination – The Department of Health Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Waiver is for adults with disabilities who need extra supports and services to safely move out or stay out of a nursing home. NHTD Waiver provides services similar to the TBI Waiver, as well as more medically focused supports including respiratory therapy, peer mentoring, nutritional education, and wellness counseling in which a registered nurse assists the participant to identify health care needs and provides guidance to minimize or prevent worsening of disease.



NETWORK/System of Care brings families together

On Thursday, October 22, a Family Dinner was held at Brookside Manor for 158 people reflecting families, youth, young adults, Ed Diana, Orange County Executive, and many agency providers. The evening was meant to thank those that have been involved in the first year of planning as well as welcome those interested in joining this initiative. Some attendees shared stories of hope and encouragement as well as their vision for the future.

A family weekend was held October 23-25 at Frost Valley YMCA in Claryville, NY. Twenty six parents, family partners and key staff spent most of Saturday working to ensure that family-driven values would be incorporated into every component of System of Care's strategic plan. Their opinions, thoughts and ideas will drive the work that NETWORK continues to do, and help build an authentic 'Family Voice' in Orange County.

SYSTEM OF SERVICES

New Dynamics & NISH honor Ms. Lincoln

On March 31st, representatives from Occupations, Inc., New Dynamics Corporation and the National Industries for the Severely Handicapped (NISH) gathered to present Eleanor Lincoln, retiring procurement analyst of West Point, with a token of their appreciation for her dedication and commitment to providing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and her efforts to further the mission of the AbilityOne program.

Ms. Lincoln has been employed as a civilian in the U.S. Army for 35 years. In her current role as procurement analyst she serves as the primary contracting policy advisor to the director of contracting (DOC) and as the West Point small business specialist. Occupations, Inc. began working with Ms. Lincoln in 1995 when the first contract was assigned for the Visitor's Center and Department of Information Management buildings.

"In all my 35 years of contracting, the most rewarding experience for me has been working with the community rehabilitations programs and assisting agencies like Occupations in their efforts to employ people with disabilities. Occupations and New Dynamics Corp are quality organizations providing quality services," commented Lincoln.

The AbilityOne Program creates jobs and training opportunities for people who are blind or who have other severe disabilities, empowering them to lead more productive and independent lives. Its primary means of doing so is by requiring Government agencies to purchase selected products and services from nonprofit organizations employing such individuals. Currently, the AbilityOne



Left to right: NISH representatives - Mike Cormier and Lou Campbell, Marylou Berardino, Eleanor Lincoln, and Jim DeStefano

Program provides employment opportunities for more than 45,000 people with disabilities by orchestrating Government purchases of products and services provided by nonprofit agencies employing such individuals throughout the country. Through two Central Nonprofit Agencies, National Industries for the Blind and NISH-Creating Employment Opportunities for People with Severe Disabilities, more than 600 non-profit agencies across the country, as well as in Puerto Rico and Guam, have been provided with employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

West Point's Capstone Project helps Occupations

Three of West Point's civil and mechanical engineering majors, through a Capstone Project, developed a tea box dispenser and counter for assembly line workers at



Occupations. The idea came about through a NISH (National Industries for the Severely Handicapped) conference. Learning that NISH was associated with Occupations, Lt. Col. Robert Rabb, mechanical engineering assistant professor in the Dept. of Civil and Mechanical Engineering, knew this would be a great opportunity for his students and Occupations.

With helpful input and feedback from Occupations' Ron Berardino and workers, and after four revisions, Firsties Erin McQuarrie, Eric Hanson and Christopher Larson took their completed project to the Middletown Occupations work center for its first run. The workers were enthusiastic about the device and liked the final design. The device can also be modified to work in other applications/jobs that could come up at different sites, such as cosmetic samples or powdered drink mixes.

Gerow joins FEC leadership team



Sean Gerow was appointed Family Empowerment Council's new Direction CDPAS (Consumer Directed Personal Care Service) Director in July 2009. Mr. Gerow has a Masters of Science from Robert Milano School of Social Research and Urban Development, a B.A. in Psychology from SUNY New Paltz, and brings with him 15 years of work and volunteer experience in the Human Services field including his participation as Board Chairman of a national grassroots advocacy organization. He is passionate in his advocacy for individuals with disabilities and their right to make informed choices regarding the management of the services in they receive.

Dr. Kamthan receives promotion

Occupations is pleased to announce the promotion of Dr. Mridula Kamthan to Medical Director of Children & Adolescent Services. In her new capacity Dr. Kamthan will oversee all children's and adolescents' psychiatric services available through Occupations, FEC and McQuade. Dr. Kamthan joined Occupations in 1998 as a Child Psychiatrist. She is dually board certified in Psychiatry and Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, and has more than 20 years of experience in the areas of psychiatry, pathology and microbiology. Dr. Kamthan will continue to provide the utmost in quality care to children served by the System of Services.



Anderson-Winchell participates on panel

In October, Amy Anderson-Winchell — Executive Vice President & C.O.O. of Occupations and Executive Director of FEC — participated on the NYS Children's Coalition panel for Children's Mental Health Services, a policy debate on clinic reform and its impact on children's behavioral health care. This forum was a structured discussion and question-based debate on how the key elements and decision points of behavioral health outpatient clinic reform may impact children, families and insurers. Also participating on the panel were the NYS Medicaid Director and the Associate NYS Office of Mental Health Commissioner.

NYS Coalition for Children's Mental Health Services (The Children's Coalition) is dedicated to providing a unified voice for children's mental healthcare providers and the families they serve through the maze and challenges of public policies, legislation and funding of the children's mental health system (www.cmhny.org).



Board Members recognized for years of service

25 years

Dan Hulse, Occupations

10 years

Todd Kelson, Occupations

5 years

Greg Dowling, Occupations
Michelle Hathaway, Occupations
Ralph Martucci, Occupations
Alicia Franqui, McQuade

Thank you, all!



Dan Hulse



Todd Kelson

Connolly earns certification

Tiffany Lenz Connolly, Human Resource Director, Occupations, Inc., recently earned nationwide certification as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR). The certification, awarded by the HR Certification Institute, signifies that Ms. Connolly possesses the theoretical knowledge and practical experience in human resource management necessary to pass a rigorous examination demonstrating an overall mastery of the body of knowledge in the field. Ms. Connolly also holds a Certified Insurance Counselor certification (CIC) for more than 14 years. We congratulate Ms. Connolly on her recent achievement!

SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Capital Campaign Update

In 2007, Occupations Foundation, Inc. focused fundraising efforts for a major renovation project of its 21-23 Grand Street buildings, Family Counseling of Occupations, Inc., located in the historic section of Newburgh. The project, “Revitalizing History and Hope”, designed to raise \$2.5 million, was planned to support treatment of additional children and adults in this underserved community and to expand upon the agency’s long tradition of service to the greater Newburgh community.

\$1.6 Million Raised to Date

In addition to a lead gift of \$900,000 from The Elaine and William Kaplan Family Private Foundation, Occupations Foundation has received contributions and commitments of over \$300,000 from foundations and philanthropists, and more than \$400,000 in federal and state government grants. The balance is expected to be raised through similar resources.

Two of Occupations’ most effective programs are the Newburgh component of Family Counseling Services of Occupations, Inc. and Newburgh Healthy Families. Both are currently housed at 21 Grand Street in Newburgh, located in the heart of the City of Newburgh next to City Hall. The history of the building at the corner of Ann and Grand Streets can be traced back as far as 1810. It has long been both a historical treasure in the field of social work and a critical community service center for its current occupant, Family Counseling Services of Occupations, Inc. This capital project clearly supports the services which are essential to addressing the mental health and child welfare needs of the children, families and adults of this high-need community.

In September 2008, state and city dignitaries joined a groundbreaking ceremony to launch the Grand Street Renovation Project. Construction is well underway. Phase I is already completed. Phase II projected completion date is December 2009.

Congressman Hinchey secures funds for Grand St.

Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) recently announced that he has secured final congressional approval of \$190,000 in federal funds for Occupations’ Capital Project in the City of Newburgh. Congressman Hinchey has secured a total of \$1.6 million in support of four critical community projects in Newburgh.

“I am very pleased that my colleagues in Congress recognized the City of Newburgh’s pressing need for this important funding,” Hinchey said. “The \$1.6 million I directed to these Newburgh-based projects represents an important down payment toward the revitalization of this city. The funds will put people to work, provide the community with improved healthcare, make the city safer, and provide young residents with the opportunity and skills they need to become successful and productive members of the community.”



SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Cheering Volunteers!

The System of Services is overseen by more than 44 volunteer board members.

Community volunteers assist our agencies with a variety of fundraising events and special projects. We couldn't do it without them, and are grateful for their hard work, dedication and commitment to our vision, values and mission. Many thanks!



FEC hosts summer gathering

On July 3rd, Family Empowerment Council (FEC), hosted an event where family, friends and community members gathered to enjoy an FEC-sponsored race at Goshen Historic Race track. Immediately following, guests enjoyed good food and good company at Cavallini's for a fundraising event to benefit FEC. The entertainment was provided by the band, Fixation, and a tricky tray raffle was held with the assistance of some of the participants from FEC's Connection Day Habilitation Program for people with developmental disabilities.

"It's great to see so many people come out to support the great work of FEC. Goshen Historic Race Track really puts on a wonderful show! It was a spectacular day and we appreciate the hard work and participation of everyone involved," commented Graham M. Skea, chair of FEC's Board of Directors. July 3rd event was co-chaired by Graham Skea and Lynn Cione, and organized and staffed by individuals receiving services through FEC, their family members, and FEC staff and board members.



SYSTEM OF SERVICES

PROS

PERSONALIZED RECOVERY ORIENTED SERVICES

A Service of Occupations, Inc.

Located at Union Center in Middletown, PROS is a rehabilitation and recovery service program available to adults with mental illness. PROS provides an array of services with community rehabilitation and support as the core component, including services to assist individuals in acquiring and maintaining skills and supports to live successfully in their communities. The program that began in 2007 and has served 230 adults to date, has seen an increase in vocation outcomes through job placement, employment, training and working with VESID. Others are volunteering or going to school. We celebrate the achievements, the outcomes, of the participants of PROS, for example: individuals are moving into their own apartment or into a supported apartment, and 24 adults have maintained sobriety and, through recovery, are making new friends and learning how to set boundaries. Many participants have achieved personal goals of learning how to drive or taking their driver's test, taking GED classes through the college credit program, studying to take the Law Bar exam, losing as much as 74 pounds to promote a healthier self, taking technical classes, quitting smoking, and fighting breast cancer with grace, style and courage. One individual took a public bus to meet friends (the bus route required a transfer in the NYC terminal).

Through the development of staff training in areas such as health and wellness, suicide prevention, person-centered planning, and family consultation, there has been an increase in family involvement and a decrease in the number of suicide attempts.

Through their own personal determination, courage and recovery, several members of PROS are now employed in the community, resolved legal issues, gone on job interviews, obtained visitation rights with their child, learned parenting skills, and left an abusive relationship. Two people graduated from PROS and are enjoying retirement. A large majority have not used inpatient mental health services during this past year. All of these individuals acknowledge their significant accomplishments in their recovery process.

Dress to impress!

Employment and Vocational Rehab Services, formally announced the opening of a new program called "DRESS TO IMPRESS". The goal is to assist individuals in obtaining proper work attire. Excited to have this program up



and running, staff have also begun the process of collaborating with other agencies to utilize the services.

Staff and members of the community have been very generous in donating proper work apparel items to this project. Additional donations to the Dress to Impress program are most welcome. Accessories such as handbags, shoes, belts, scarves, etc. may also be included. Please contact Team Leader, Valerie Litt, at (845) 798-6464 or by e-mail at vlitt@occupations.org.



Chris Ashman presents an Achievement Award to PROS participants, Irene Scott (left) and Karen Rolf, as Amy-Anderson Winchell looks on with pride in their accomplishments.



SYSTEM OF SERVICES



Providing a Broad Diversity of Services

Occupations, Inc.

Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
by calling 1-888-750-2266.

- Service Access Center
- Clinical Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Transportation
- Services for Children and Adolescents
- Community Outreach Services
- Career Guidance and Employment Services

Family Empowerment Council, Inc.

Services are available by calling 845-343-8100
or toll free at 1-888-343-8181.

- Early Intervention
- Service Coordination
- Educational Advocacy
- Respite
- Family Empowerment Project
- LEARN (Residential/Habilitation)
- Connections Day Habilitation
- Network - Family Support
- Consumer-Directed Personal Care Services (Direction)

MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITIES

Check with your company to see if they
have a matching gift program.

Your gift could be matched, or possibly even
double-matched through your employer.

McQuade Children's Services

Founded in 1862, McQuade is a private,
not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing
therapeutic residential care, special education,
community group homes, emergency diagnostic center
services, and community-based prevention programs
for special needs children and their families.

New Dynamics Corp

You can purchase the same products being supplied
to the federal government which are manufactured
by people with disabilities. Your purchase provides
employment opportunities to individuals with severe
disabilities, allowing them to lead productive lives in
the community. *Contact Sales at 1-800-925-3421.*

Include Us in Your Estate Planning

Planned gifts are deductible contributions that
do not significantly affect current finances or after-tax
income, and are a wonderful way to make a long-lasting
contribution and ensure the quality of life for those we serve.

Planned giving may be made through gifts of cash,
real estate, bequests, life insurance,
appreciated stock and/or trust annuities.

For more information, contact the Development Office
at (845) 692-4454, Ext. 101.

SYSTEM OF SERVICES

c/o Occupations, Inc., 15 Fortune Road West, Middletown, NY 10941

(845) 692-4454

www.occupations.org • www.familyempowerment.org • www.newdynamics.net • www.mcquade.org