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*"Give me an opportunity and I will succeed"*

## Community Corner

### What My Friend Means To Me

Heather Meeker & Brad Haar

Inez Halverson has been my neighbor and friend since the summer of 2008. She was out working in the yard one day and I was taking out the garbage. I just started talking to her and pretty soon we were friends.

Most of the time we say hello to each other is when we are out in the yard. Inez likes to work in her yard. Last fall I went over and helped her pick up leaves, but then I had to go home and do some other things.

Some times I stop over to her house and she will be baking. I will just play with her kitty while she bakes. I love to bake and she has come to my house to help teach me things like how to grease a pan, how to cut hot brownies in the pan and other stuff like that. One day, I needed some biscuit mix and I went to borrow some from her. She did not have any, so she made me a batch from scratch. They were really good, too.

Inez is someone I can talk with. She treats me with respect and listens to what I want to say. Because she has lived in the same house for a long time, she knows a lot of my friends. She says she also knows a lot of their families. I invited her to ECCO's Christmas party this year, where she got to talk with a lot of people she knew.

A staff person once asked her what she would tell others about being friends with someone who happened to have a disability and she said, "Treat them just like everyone else. That is how I was taught and I think it is how it should be."



Heather and Inez spending time together

L to R  
 Heather Meeker  
 Inez Halverson

### LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF ECCO, INC.

#### ECCO, Inc. Thru the Years

- 1974 ECCO established as East Central Career Opportunities, operated by volunteers under the direction of the Special Education Department at Dakota State. Four people served.
- 1975 February 7 - Formal incorporation
- 1976 Name changed to Every Citizen Counts Organization
- 1977 Day program operated four days per week in one rented room at the Dakota State Science Center. First paid staff hired: One director/teacher, one secretary/ bookkeeper. Seven people served.
- 1978 Certified by the state of South Dakota
- 1979 Madison City Commission approved purchase of a van for ECCO. ECCO Dance Marathon a major source of funds.
- 1980 Construction began on first residential building- a house for 12 people at N Harth
- 1982 Second building purchased- a group home for eight more people at N Egan
- 1983 Day Program moved from two rented rooms in Dakota State to building located at 311 S Union. ECCO received national accreditation (ACDD)
- 1984 Remodeling/expansion at 311 S Union doubled workshop/office space.
- 1986 Lincoln Ave apartments constructed with space for ten people.
- 1987 Duplex purchased and remodeled to provide additional housing at NE 5th
- 1991 Capital Campaign resulted in new workshop/office building constructed at 706 SW 7th St.
- 1992 ECCO, Inc. receives "Accreditation with Distinction"
- 1995 Employment Solutions established
- 1996 Received a high rating for certification under Life Quality Outcome Standards
- 1997 Purchased new building at SE 3rd- a home for six people
- 2000 65 people receive services. Supported Living services enable 35 people to rent. Employment Solutions assists 29 people with job development/work experiences and employment in community jobs.
- 2004 College of Direct Support (Internet-based learning) for Direct Support Professionals, Frontline Supervisors, people receiving services and their families began at ECCO.
- 2005 Pilot Independent Living Project began with three men receiving services
- 2006 Received national three year certification under the Council of Quality and Leadership- 72 people receive services.
- 2009 Received national four year certification under the Council of Quality and Leadership
- 2010 ECCO, Inc. celebrates 35 years of providing services



L to R  
Connie Martin and Leigh Ann McInnis finish a Jar with decorative ribbon and bows.



L to R  
Barb Hines and Kelly VanTassel put the tags on Jars for the Craft Fair

**Craft Fair**  
Jessica Haak

People who participate in Day Service activities once again participated in the Madison Chamber Show and Sell craft fair, held November 28, 2009. People decided to take a different approach this time and not create hand-crafted items, but to create simple, but convenient ready to give gifts. Items chosen were "Recipes in a Jar" and "Themed Gift Baskets."

Day Services first chose recipes for the "Recipes in a Jar", such as Chai Tea mix, Apple Orchard Pancake mix and 6-Bean Soup mix. Once all items were purchased, the jars were filled with the ingredients. People who participated enjoyed the process of measuring, pouring and layering the ingredients. After each jar was filled, it was topped with a decorative cloth seal and handmade card, which listed the ingredients that would need to be added to complete the recipe.

Themes for the gift baskets were chosen, such as "Winter", "Spa", "Doggie", "Man's", etc. People who participated in this activity enjoyed shopping for the items to include in each basket. People learned what type of items would match each theme, such as blanket, cocoa, candle, 6-Bean Soup mix, etc. fit the "Winter" theme and lotions, oils, bath beads, candles, chocolate, etc. fit the "Spa" theme. After all items were purchased, they were displayed in a basket and wrapped with cellophane wrap. Decorative ribbon and bows were added, along with To/From card. When asked about the projects, Jack Kieffer said "The projects were a lot of fun to make."

Saturday morning, November, 28, the items were loaded up and a booth was set up at the Chamber Show and Sell. People who participated in preparing the items took turns managing the booth and selling the items. Jack said "I really enjoyed the craft fair. I met lots of people and saw lots of people I hadn't seen for a long time. I definitely want to help again next year." Money made from the items will be used towards future Day Service activities

**2009 Family Focus Group**  
Andrea Tarrell & Brad Haar

This year, people supported found out Norm Jerke, our executive director, was not going to be able to host the second annual Christmas Party Family Focus Group. When asked, we thought it would fun, but scary, to host the event and tell family members what we think and what we want our lives to be like. It took about 20 of us to replace Norm, but we got it done.

There were about 10 family members, several staff and, as I said, about 20 of us at the meeting. It was actually kind of fun. Brad Haar was the discussion leader. We followed a power point presentation we ourselves had used about a month earlier.

The power point first reviewed what services have looked like in the past. The second half looked at the two questions ECCO is now using to create our strategic plan for the future; "What is a meaningful day/life" and "How do we provide individualized services"? We also asked family members what they thought a "meaningful day/life" meant to them personally. Ironically, they listed the same things staff and we, the people, had already listed. So, we learned that family members and people supported really want the same things in life.

Next time, maybe we can talk about where the future is really taking us.

**Staff Anniversaries**

January	February	March
Mary Colling- 7 years	Amber Commes- 3 years	Michelle Hoffman- 9 years
Nicole Doblal- 1 year	Beryl Moser- 8 years	Barb Minnaert- 25 years
Lyle Finck- 1 year	Julie Palmund- 2 years	Brian Reed- 6 years
Jessica Haak- 9 years	Stacy Ulwelling- 8 years	Kiley Songstad- 1 year
Vicki Kommes- 12 years		
Donna Uthe- 12 years		

**One Page Profile Class**

Ruth McKinstry

**The Learning Process**

L to R

Angie Minnaert, Jolon Beck,  
Pam Slaathaug, Linda Anderson,  
Nancy Habeger



Classes to learn about creating a one page profile have been an ongoing process for several months now. Twenty people are attending classes during the week to learn about profiles; what they are and how to make them. The profile is made up of three parts:

What is important to me, what others like and admire about me, and what supports are needed. By focusing on the most important information, a one page profile will enable staff to get a quick overview of what a person is like and what supports they need. This should help to ensure better services and supports.

The profiles are personal and reflect each person's unique style; using pictures and a design that they choose. A profile may be for a work setting or for a home setting due to the different activities and supports needed for each setting. As a person's needs and supports change the profile will also change to reflect that.

Everyone involved has been very receptive to the profile and is enjoying the creative process. At this time, several profiles have been created.

**Mall Walk for CCHS**

Lyla Finck

The Movin' Moners L to R  
Stephanie Kroontje, Lyla Finck, Emily Pyle  
(seated) Simone Ellis

On Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, Simone embarked on a 1.2 mile walk at the Empire Mall to support her Alma Mater- Children's Care Hospital and School. Simone and her team, Lyla, Stephanie & Emily, calling themselves *The Movin' Moners*, found sponsors to contribute \$500. Simone, alone, raised over \$250, and even won a \$20 Visa Gift card. After joining with over 1,200 other supporters to raise money for adaptive equipment, Simone enjoyed staying overnight in Sioux Falls to take in some shopping and to go to the movies. She had a wonderful time and would like to thank everyone who donated to this cause.



**Outcomes Class Continues**

Brenda Grogan

Every Tuesday and Thursday, Outcomes class is held at St John's Lutheran Church. After defining their ground rules, every class would then practice following them.

People supported who attend engage in topics such as rights and responsibilities, choice-making, respect, making and having friends, safety, self-advocacy, ECCO's annual budget, and how to live with a reduced budget after looking at the national, state and local budgets.

Other topics included: Person-centered Thinking definitions, HIPPA rules and regulations, intimacy and intimate relationships, and understanding dignity of risk. Topic choices were often generated by discussions held and subsequent questions.

The following College of Direct Support courses were completed with tests taken by all participants: Communication, Community Resources, Community Inclusion and Community Life.

ECCO's strategic plan, which includes Meaningful Day/Life and Individualized Services was discussed at length.