

Enable Voices

MAY 2008

Opening of "Art at Enable"

Enable held its first "Art at Enable" Opening on Friday, April 18, featuring collage and acrylic paintings on paper and canvas created by persons with disabilities served by Enable who reside in East Windsor and Hamilton, NJ. MSW student intern, Myrna Ludwig, helped the artists prepare their paintings and worked with Kirsten Yard, Enable's Community Engagement Coordinator, to establish the display area.

Many consumers and staff attended the Opening and were proud to see their friends who produced the art receive certificates for their work. An array of snacks and refreshments were served.

The art display area in Enable's training room at headquarters intends to showcase art created by persons connected with Enable in a way that reflects our mission and values. Selected art will celebrate the lives of those we serve, focus on their capabilities, and portray their individuality. Displays will be changed three times a year.



Pictured from left are Judy Gallo, Sharon Copeland, Christine Potent, Myrna Ludwig and Sharon Flynn.

Renovated Space Improves Quality of Day Program



Newly renovated space in Headquarter's building for the Day Program.

At the start of December 2007, Enable's Day Program moved into a new home. The program was relocated from Ewing to a newly renovated space at Enable's Headquarter's building in Princeton. From the vibrant, yellow walls displaying the art work of consumers to the smell of freshly brewed coffee, the whole atmosphere makes for an uplifting experience for those who participate in the program.

Complimenting the new look is a spacious, open gathering area plus three activity rooms, a large kitchen, and two large, wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, a necessity that was missing at the last location.

"The consumers now have more choices to participate in a variety of different activities including cooking in the kitchen, arts and crafts in the art room, relaxing in the sensory room and playing games in the game room," says Diana Lastra, Day Program Manager. "There is also enough room for consumers who want to work independently to have the space to do their own thing," she added.

The consumers are equally excited about their new surroundings. Program participant Denise Lesko comments, "I love coming here everyday; I only wish we could have moved a long time ago." Lastra observed, "The consumers appear happier because they have more choices and a brighter, more cheerful atmosphere that better meets their needs."

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Enable is a non-profit organization that has provided services to persons with physical and cognitive disabilities since 1989. Enable is devoted to supporting individuals with disabilities to live full and independent lives. We promote individual

choice that reflects what matters most to the persons we serve and their families. We provide services, supports, programs, and living arrangements that facilitate full inclusion into community life throughout the central New Jersey area.

Leading the Way to a Fulfilling Life



*Joanna Chatman,
Residential Manager,
Roberts Group Home*

When asked why she loves working for Enable in the position of Residential Manager for the Roberts Group Home, Joanna Chatman says, "I believe it gives me a purpose, a vision and a goal in my life. I feel passionate about my job and this particular field I work in." Along with this, she also enjoys making others laugh and likes to have a good time with the persons she helps. Chatman, who has been with Enable since 2003, noted, "I really believe it is my calling to take care of others and make sure they get the best care I can give them," she says.

Working in the field of disabilities is nothing new for Chatman. Before coming to Enable, she was the Residential and Vocational Settings Manager at the Arc of Monmouth County for 12 years. She has also worked as a job coach.

In her position as manager, Chatman is responsible for keeping the group home in order, coordinating staff schedules, supporting the consumer's interests and activities in the community and making sure that the home is a pleasant and safe environment. She is also an advocate for her staff who "work tirelessly on my team," she remarked.

In addition to her work with Enable, Chatman is very active in her church. As a leader in her church, her responsibilities include going into the community to teach Bible studies and give communion to seniors living in nursing and assisted living homes.

Overall, Chatman leads a fulfilling life. She hopes to facilitate the same for the individuals she supports at Roberts Group Home. "I try to assist the ladies with the planning of goals and achieving dreams that they have—from a date to a trip to other goals they have for themselves," she says.

Future Search Underway

Enable began its strategic planning process for 2009-11 with a Future Search Conference attended by over 30 representatives from Enable's board of trustees, staff, consumers, family members of consumers and other community stakeholders. The time together over two days included a variety of exercises to identify significant points in Enable's history, current trends, and the strengths, weaknesses and dreams of Enable.

The group found five areas of shared concerns: Support and Advocacy; Visibility and Funding; Quality Assurance and Technology; the Workforce; and Service Delivery.

The facilitator of the conference, Charlotte Anderson, collated the information captured during the conference and categorized the various recommendations. This report is now being reviewed and expanded by the staff and board members of Enable. The end result will be goals and suggestion actions for each of the five areas...a map for the future.

A Holiday Thank You From Enable

On behalf of Enable, Inc., the persons we serve, the staff and board members, we express our thanks to the many individuals, groups, businesses, congregations and schools who helped make the holidays brighter for 188 individuals with disabilities and their family members through the Holiday Gift Appeal. The Appeal fulfills the holiday wishes of persons with disabilities and their families served by Enable by linking them to persons in the community who wish to donate items to meet specific needs.

We thank members of the Princeton Alliance Church and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Princeton, Beth El Synagogue in East Windsor and St. David's Episcopal Church in Cranbury. The employees of Pepper Hamilton, PETCO, Ortho-Diagnostics, Mathematica did a stellar job of providing gifts and food. Toys for Tots and Afew donated toys.

Gifts were wrapped by Boy Scout Troop 5700 and the Senior Youth Group from St. David the King Roman Catholic Church in West Windsor. Generous amounts of food were collected by The Hun School in Princeton as well as Harvest Christian Fellowship in Columbus.

We were grateful to the citizens of the Middlesex area who made donations to the Courier News holiday appeal. One of the recipients of the Courier's Wish Book for December 2007 were the women residing at Enable's Calvert home.

And finally, we thank our Holiday Gift Appeal co-chairs, Liz Boyle and Lois Miller, for coordinating such a successful event and for donating wrapping and supplies. Without these giving hearts, we wouldn't be able to provide this type of service each year. Thank you everyone!



Pictured above (from left to right) are members of the Senior Youth Group at St. David the King in West Windsor and Boy Scout Troop 5700. Both groups wrapped gifts of clothes and games for the Holiday Gift Appeal.



Pictured above is Maria Tsistinas practicing flash cards with Destyne Pitts.

New Insights Gained As A Volunteer

When we volunteer, we usually expect to give of ourselves. But volunteering can also bring new insights and personal rewards that are priceless. Volunteer Destyne Pitts initially became a volunteer so she could feel good about helping others out. She has not only been successful at doing that, but in addition, “I have gained friends and felt the reward within myself for doing something I know God would be proud of.”

Pitts, the niece of Enable staff person Dawn Turner-Pitts, is a dedicated volunteer. She has been regularly visiting with the women who live at the Gallavan Group Home, offering a friendly smile with a wide-open heart. While working with the women, they read books, play games and learn to spell words. “She brightens the days of Judi, Elaine, Shannon and Maria,” says Manager Mardea Mowenn.

Pitts says that her experience with Enable and work with the individuals at Gallavan have taught her that, “life is what you make of it. Having a disability is hard to deal with. But even though my friends at Gallavan have disabilities, they don’t let the disability become them,” she says. She continued, “I learned that I enjoy helping others more than I expected (especially persons with disabilities). The residents have taught me how to look at life in a new light. They are always happy and seem to really love life.”



The United Way of Greater Mercer county partially funds our programs.

Expanding Services Through New Collaborations

Enable, Inc. began providing services January 2008 through two new collaborations with support from the United Way of Greater Mercer County. The local United Way decided to change the way it funded community services and required providers to work together through collaborations for its 2008-10 funding cycle. Enable chose to do so in two initiatives under their “Caring for Seniors and People with Disabilities” category: Project Connect which covers roughly the southern part of Mercer County and Partners in Caring which covers the northern portion of the County. Both collaborations aim to assist seniors over age 60 who are experiencing age-related difficulties, and people of any age with physical, mental or developmental disabilities, to remain in their own homes, live in good health and with dignity, and achieve the greatest independence possible.

Project Connect with lead agency Mercer Street Friends has the following agencies participating: ARC Mercer, Catholic Charities, Enable, Interfaith Caregivers, Jewish Family and Children’s Services, Mobile Meals and Mt. Carmel Guild. Enable will be providing the following services under this coalition: accessibility modifications, respite care, and case management.

Partners in Caring with lead agency Jewish Family and Children’s Services has the following agencies participating: American Red Cross of Central NJ, Enable, Greater Mercer Ride Provide, Princeton Senior Resource Center, and Reassurance Contact of Mercer County. Enable will be providing the following services with this coalition: case management, accessibility modifications, volunteer visits, nurse health assessments and visits, and respite care.

Both collaborations offer Enable the opportunity to serve elderly persons who have disabilities due to age who may not be connected to DDD (NJ Division on Developmental Disabilities). This is new to Enable. Serving seniors will be in addition to our on-going commitment to serve persons with chronic and on-going disabilities that occur early in life. The collaborations expect to deliver coordinated services to hundreds of seniors and persons with disabilities in the next year.

If you give through the United Way, and want to support Enable, you may designate your donation to Enable at the time you make your pledge. If you do not designate, the funds will be shared among all the agencies whose services are funded with United Way dollars—including these new collaborations. Either way, Enable is grateful for funds that help us more effectively serve persons with disabilities—no matter what their age may be.

Recognition to Pepper Hamilton

At the holiday open house in December 2007, Enable, Inc. presented a plaque to Audrey Wisotsky and Michael Canavan from Pepper Hamilton, LLC, in appreciation of their support. These law offices have assisted Enable in many ways through the years from donating legal expertise, to actively participating in the Holiday Gift Appeal and the annual dinner, to encouraging their employees to be active volunteers in the community. Wisotsky was a former Board President for Enable and continues to serve on the Financial Development Committee. She also chaired the April 2008 Gala Benefit for Enable. The plaque acknowledged the recent donation of office furniture by Pepper Hamilton. The eighteen modular work stations were a huge help in furnishing the newly renovated offices at headquarters.



Pictured above (from left) Sharon Copeland, Maureen O’Malley Baus, Audrey Wisotsky and Michael Canavan.

The Magic of Independence Gala Held in April



Pictured above (from left) Kathy Bologna, Ruth Sayer, Maureen O'Malley Baus and Patricia O'Malley celebrating a magical event.

"The Magic of Independence" gala benefit attended by 190 guests was held on April 12, 2008 at the Cherry Valley Country Club in Skillman. Audrey Wisotsky was the chair of the Gala Committee. The event, which netted over \$55,000, included dinner, psychic entertainment by Ted St. James, an 8-piece string ensemble and silent and cried auctions. Patrick Boyle did a spectacular job as auctioneer for the cried auction items. The auctions alone brought in more than \$20,000.

Sponsorship support was strong this year. Gold sponsors included the Baus Foundation, Bloomberg, Hovione, Pepper Hamilton, Stark & Stark and The

Boyle Family Foundation. This year, four Supporting Sponsors made it possible for over 40 consumers and staff to attend: The O'Malley Family Trust, PSE&G, Sovereign Bank and Turner Construction. Our thanks to the Silver and Bronze sponsors, also: Kathleen and Paul Bagley, Karen Collias and Geoffrey Levitt, Michael and Joan Horton, Ruth Sayer, Valerie and Walter Simson, and Audrey and Marc Wisotsky. Enable is grateful to the many persons who attended as well as donors who made this event one of the most financially successful dinners to date!



Let's All Go to the Ball Game!

Enable invites you to join us for a fun night out with your family, co-workers and friends at Trenton Thunder on Friday, July 25, 2008 at 7:05 pm. The Thunder will play against The Portland Sea Dogs (Boston Red Sox affiliate).

Tickets are only \$10.00 each and are the perfect gift for Father's Day or a birthday.

We also need 8-10 volunteers the night of the game to help sell Trenton Thunder raffle tickets for their 50/50. Half the proceeds will go to Enable.

To order tickets or for more information, please contact Kirsten Yard at kyard@enablenj.org or 609-987-5003, ext 124.

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Enabling individuals with disabilities to live full and independent lives in the community

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