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INTERCONNECT

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Farewell to Our Dear Friends



taph seems more applicable in recognizing these two individuals.

Both Christa McAloney, Senior Director of Human Resources, and Al Sommerville, Director of Finance, suffered terminal illnesses and passed away within weeks of each other.

There is some irony in this, as it was more than a decade ago with Christa and Al left the banking industry and brought their individual talents to JNCS. Both had immediate impact on the atmosphere in our unique agency. Their professional talents strengthened the organization, but, more impressively, their humanity and empathy enriched our sense of family. There is no doubt, Christa and Al would have made more money in other endeavors, but they both communicated the joy of seeing the results of their work and appreciated the selflessness and commitment that is uncommon among many other fields.

Christa's wit and charm made her a



favorite to spice up even the most bureaucratic of meetings. She enjoyed sharing stories of her travels, especially to her beloved Ireland and inspired many to seek out their own travel dreams. Christa's best days were when she could navigate a complicated situation and have everyone leave her office feeling better than they may have walked in.

Al was known around the office as a Renaissance man. His love and knowledge of rare art, politics and

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even pop culture astounded his colleagues and friends. Al could update the office staff on the latest in reality TV. He was our "Dancing with the Stars" correspondent.

Both Christa and Al were amazing cooks who frequented the Food Channel. Their pot luck dishes were always crowd pleasers! It seemed that they both knew all the ways to bring joy to people through their hearts and stomachs.

Forever in our hearts and imbedded in the legacy of JNCS.

Recently a film titled "42" depicted the life of Jackie Robinson, a pioneer who broke the color barrier in baseball and opened the doors to others to achieve a life of dignity and created an atmosphere where people of all colors and aptitudes could work together to create a better society. On Robinson's tombstone is a quote, "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives".

The Jay Nolan Community Services family has suffered the loss of two beloved colleagues. No other epi-

OUR VISION

EVERY PERSON LIVING A QUALITY LIFE

EMPOWERED

INCLUDED

EMBRACED

OUR AGENCY LIVING OUR MISSION

STRONG

RESPECTED

VISIONARY

Our Philosophy JNCS Believes that:

- All people have unique capabilities and gifts.
- All people need a sense of belonging to a family and to their community.
- All people have the right to be heard and to have their ideas acknowledged.
- All people can live in their own homes with the proper supported and assistance.
- All people have the ability to contribute to their families and their communities.
- All people should be treated with dignity and respect, with their privacy protected.
- Relationships and trust are equally fundamental for a sense of inclusion to happen.
- For all persons, self-advocacy and empowerment should be promoted and honored.
- All people have the right to be free from pain, coercion, and cruelty inflicted by others.

Ecstatic Advocates



Imagine having people in your life every day that are paid to guide you towards your personal goals. The purpose of their job is to help keep you on track with your diet, bring it to your attention that you should clean your home, and remind you to take your medication. This may sound helpful, but there is another side to consider. A paid person reminding you that you are drinking your third soda of the day and saying, "should you really have another soda?". A paid person charting your weight and helping you prepare healthy meals, even though they could afford to lose a few pounds too.

A conversation in a Supported Living team meeting developed into a more thoughtful discussion about the perspective of the individual. The very people that Jay Nolan Community Services exists for. We discussed how people share in these non-organic paid relationships. We talked about how patient, tolerant, and resilient people must be to have staff members come

in and out of their lives. We also discussed how people should have a forum to share their thoughts, feelings, stories, and ideas. From this came the idea of starting an advocacy meeting.

The obvious person we all agreed would be a pioneer in this venture was our own, Martin Gottenbos! With his exuberance, positive attitude and love for life, we knew that if he chose to take on leadership of the advocacy group it would have a tone that would draw people in. Martin agreed to take on the role of lead coordinator and, with the assistance of Suad Bisogno, Community Support Supervisor, worked on organizing creating a flyer and organizing the meeting. Suad also asked Anna Schuricht to participate. Anna recounts, "We tried to get more and more people to come. We even went to restaurants to try and get more people involved."

Eventually, their hard worked paid off and the Advocacy Group has been going strong for over

two years! The Advocates began to invite guest speakers like Bebo Saab, Consumer Clients Rights Advocate, Keith Bonchek, a motivational speaker and advocate, and Wesley Witherspoon who works with USC, Children's hospital and the Association of University Center of Disabilities to help the community strengthen self-advocacy. These guest speakers began to teach the advocates valuable information applicable in daily life. Topics have included steps to self advocacy, emergency preparedness and voting.

The group is now more than twenty people strong! It isn't all business, as the group does find time to celebrate holidays with themed potlucks and parties. Several friendships have been made and even a romance has evolved from these meetings! People are able to share resources, express their feelings, support each other and learn about self empowerment. JNCS is very proud to support the Ecstatic Advocates!

May 28, 2014

The Ecstatic Advocates present:

How to Be Safe in My Home and My Community!

Hosted in the Training room at Jay Nolan Community Services

Located on the first floor at 11:30am

It's a POTLUCK! Sign up with Brenda Miranda at 818-361-6400 ext. 105



Success Granted!

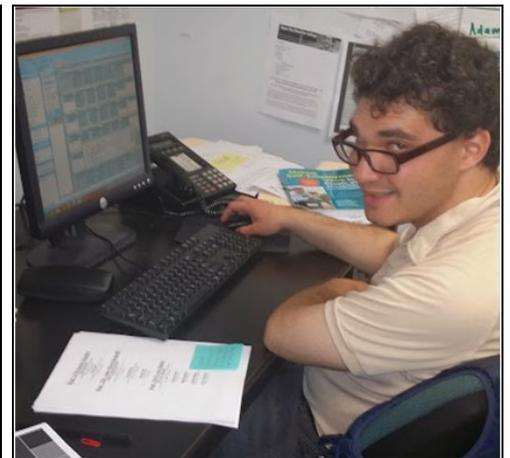


Marie is a 22 year old young lady who has always had a passion for the fire department and emergency response. When we initially met Marie she expressed her interest in the fire department and showed us all of the books and DVD's she has. She also spoke to us about all of the different types of sirens each car or truck has. Through the discovery process we found that she was interested in learning more about emergency response. We found a certification program called CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), which is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens may initially be on their own and their actions can make a difference. While people will respond to others in need without the training, one goal of the CERT program is to help them do so effectively and efficiently without placing themselves in unnecessary danger. In the CERT training, citizens learn to: manage utilities and put out small fires, treat the three medical killers by opening airways, controlling bleeding, and treating for shock, provide basic medical aid, search for and rescue victims safely, organize themselves and spontaneous volunteers to be effective, and collect disaster intelligence to support first responder efforts. Marie and her employment specialist Crystal Nunez completed the 7 week CERT training on November 26, 2013. She received a certificate and is now a Community Emergency Response Team member.



Michael is a 25 year old young man who is very interested in owning a freelance graphics design business. Michael attends Santa Monica Community College and is taking courses in graphics design. Through the grant we set up several internship opportunities for him to get his hands dirty. In December, we assisted Michael in writing his business plan and he launched his freelance business "Magnificent Mike's Graphics". He is now streaming work from several different businesses. He is interning for the Autism Society of Los Angeles. He is collecting data and resources for ASLA and imputing the information into a database. He was hired at Jay Nolan Community Services to do data entry and office work. He is also

creating a website for an Artist so that the artist can promote his artwork. Michael is in the final stages of creating his business website and he plans to launch it very soon!



Jay Nolan Community Services and myself, would like to wish Mr. Bobby Bowles a very special 50th birthday. Bobby resided in one of Jay Nolan Community Services group homes before the conversion to Supported Living Services in 1993. He moved to San Pedro with his long-term staff member, roommate, and friend, Ms. Alix Patterson to be closer to his family.

Bobby now lives a short ten minute walk from his parents' home and enjoys spending weekly dinners, holiday celebrations, and vacations with them. He also enjoys spending time with his nephews, though one has recently left for college.

Every birthday Bobby's mom asks him what he wants her to make for his birthday dinner and, without fail, for the last 25 years (plus) Bobby has chosen her delicious lasagna. Having had the opportunity to savor this dish, I have to say that Bobby has made a great decision every year! Happy Birthday, Bobby and it's been a pleasure getting to know you and your family. With Love, Jessica



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The Mission of Jay Nolan Community Services, Inc. is to enable individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities to live fulfilling lives as members of the community by providing support services customized to their individual needs.

Spring Career Fair!

The annual advent of Springtime has always engendered thoughts of “love in the air” and “a season of planting seeds for harvest”. For the Human Resources staff at Jay Nolan Community Services (JNCS), this season is our busiest and most important as we branch out into the greater San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valley areas and even into the Antelope Valley area to visit local universities and Community Colleges. Spring is the time for College Career Fairs. The Career Fairs provide JNCS with the exposure to spread the word about our vision to the students and potential employees. The students of the California College system use these Fairs to seek out employment opportunities to supplement their income as they continue their studies toward a degree. In the case of students on the verge of graduation, JNCS could provide the perfect environment for graduates who demonstrate a desire to pursue a career in a field where thoughtfulness, respect, and a caring philosophy toward people with disabilities would be a perfect fit for the graduate, the con-

sumer, and Jay Nolan Community Services. Some of the recent sites we have visited have been CSUN, LA Valley College, Glendale Community College, and College of the Canyons at Valencia. It is essential for JNCS to hire the most qualified candidates to ensure that our individuals receive the most highly professional services possible. As a result of going to Career Fairs, we can provide full and part-time employment to exceptionally gifted people who are choosing a career in servicing others. At these College Career Fairs, we set-up alongside other non-profit organizations and many large successful private Corporations that are all part of the Valley Economic Alliance

Group. JNCS is extremely fortunate to attract these gifted candidates. The candidates come to us in a season of “love” to grow “seeds” of service that we all “harvest”; especially, the beloved recipients of our services.

