

Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth

To Coordinate... To Enhance... To Serve... Through Communication...

Meet Melissa Emmer



You are reading the 300th edition of Monday Bulletin! We are delighted by the response, input, and enthusiasm of our readers, as well as the hard work of the Monday Bulletin team. This month, we wish to re-introduce Melissa Emmer, who is responsible for distribution of the Monday Bulletin.

Melissa has served as a secretary to Youth Services and the Staff Development Unit of Michigan Rehabilitation Services since July of 2005. The Staff Development Unit keeps her busy preparing for training events and working with Paula Brzezinski on updating and maintaining the MRS Intranet and Internet. She is also a member of the Ambassador Team.

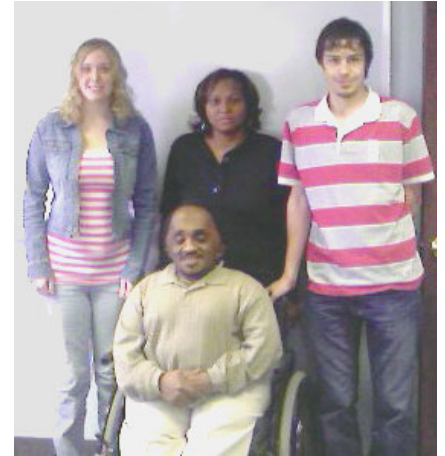
Before joining MRS, Melissa attended Baker College of Owosso and worked as a marketing assistant at a Lansing-based marketing company, Inline Design, Inc.

You are invited to send your best practice stories, student success stories, and "I learned a lesson" experiences for publication in the Monday Bulletin. Please e-mail submissions to Lynn Boza, the editor, at Bozal@michigan.gov.

Transition Students LEAP Forward!

By Randy Graise and Carla Williams

Students who reside in the Downriver Community and actively participate with the Taylor Office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services are provided youth transition services in the form of an eight session workshop series entitled LEAPS. LEAPS, which stand for Life and Employment Advancement Planning Series, prepares its participants for life after high school. MRS counselor Carla Williams and Randy Graise of Ran Del Enterprises worked together to customize and implement a form of LEAPS for high school youth needing transition services. The half-day workshops are made possible through an MRS grant to Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit-Westland Branch and case service funds. In the workshops facilitated by Randy Graise of Ran Del Enterprises and Deb Ridsdale of Goodwill Industries, students learn job seeking skills as well as job retention skills. During the sessions, students experience group mentoring that provides opportunities for personal reflection and development. In addition, students role play job scenarios, and debrief "do's and don'ts" that occur in daily life on a job.



Pictured above are Julie Demos, graduate of Riverview High School and Thomas Cosby, graduate of Huron High School, and counselor Carla Williams with Randy Graise.

Community Supports On My Own of Michigan Members

TROY, MI- The nonprofit organization *On My Own of Michigan* recently hosted more than 200 members and supporters at its 9th Annual Awards banquet. The highlight of this event is the celebration of the proud accomplishments of members. This event also provides supporters with real and tangible evidence that their support makes a difference in the lives of an extraordinary group of people.

One of the award recipients was Becky Henkin who received the Personal Achievement Award for attaining her goal of moving into her own apartment. Becky reflects the kind

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Community Support for On My Own of Michigan

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of personal success that can be achieved when the community comes together to reach a common goal.

Many of Becky's supporters were in attendance at the Awards Banquet to celebrate her achievements. Anne Kelly, Transition Coordinator, Jardon School, focused on helping Becky gain the confidence she needed to pursue independence. Ms. Kelly



Becky Henkin

connected Becky with Michigan Rehabilitative Services; an organization that provides vocational service including assessing needs and goals. After assessing Becky's needs and desires, she was directed to Dawn Lenker, Dream Placement Services. Dream Placement Services put a training and support plan in place to ensure employment success. Dream Placemnt then contacted Katie Adams of Katie's Kids, a childcare center in Royal Oak to pursue employment for Becky.

Becky successfully landed the job of childcare worker at Katie's Kids. Employer Katie Adams is delighted with her decision to hire Becky. Ms Adams stated, "Becky is sweet and caring. She does what she needs to do and readily accepts direction. The children bring true joy to Becky—laughter is a big part of the job". Becky has been employed at Katie's Kids for more than one and a half years.

Becky's parents, Sid and Barbara Henkin said that they depended on the people who were helping Becky—they really came through. According to Becky's parents, "you can't do it all alone, it really takes a team ."

With a job in place, Becky was ready to pursue her goal of living independently and moved into her first apartment last year. She takes public transportation to work and to grocery shop. Living independently means managing personal finances. Becky, as well as other On My Own members, manage their own finances with the assistance of Flagstar Bank, Awards Banquet Event Sponsor and attendee.

"We want folks to become as self-sufficient as possible, with minimal support from us says program director Lee Wainwright." Lee added, "since Becky has become an apartment member we are seeing more of her sense of humor."

As for Becky, she said that in the beginning she had mixed feelings about apartment living—she was both nervous and happy. Becky said she was also concerned about how her parents would feel because she is the last sibling to leave the family home. Becky has grown into adulthood this past year and is making her own decisions. She has more confidence and relies less on her parents and reaches out to On My Own when she has concerns.

Becky said, "It is important to be an On My Own member cuz I meet new people, I like the social outings and classes. I like having my own place where my brother can call; it makes me feel grown up."

About On My Own of Michigan

On My Own of Michigan helps adults with mild developmental disabilities become independent, social and contributing members of the community. We believe that individuals living with developmental disabilities have the right to choose where they live, work, play and worship. When given the opportunity, experience and appropriate supports, they can become active members of the community.

Facts and Funding

Founded in 1997, On My Own of Michigan serves to help adults with developmental disabilities that include; mental retardation, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy and learning disabilities.

On My Own is a private, non-profit organization based in Oakland County that receives neither United Way nor governmental funding. Forty percent of our revenue is derived from our service fees while the other sixty percent comes from charitable gifts, corporate donations, grants and foundation donations. and special event fundraising. We are supported by families, friends, guardians and volunteers. At its heart, On My Own is composed of caring people who give their time, financial help or both, in order to make the lives of others better.

Program

On My Own was developed to help young adults transition from dependency to self-sufficiency. By providing guidance through all phases of this journey, On My Own helps to cultivate self-esteem and self-reliance. Members receive support and encouragement and participate in a variety of structured classes and social activities that promote growth. Professional counseling is available where appropriate. The Social and Apartment Living Programs provided customized supports and opportunities.

MI Opportunity Partnership: Job Placement Key to Success

February 27, 2007 - Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today announced the MI Opportunity Partnership, Working for Jobs Today! employer pledge drive is on target to reach its year two goal of placing 40,000 workers into jobs. The program, which matches unemployed workers with existing job vacancies, and provides accelerated training for future high growth career opportunities such as health care, is a key element of Granholm's comprehensive plan to invest in the state's economy.

"As Michigan's workers cope with the effects of a changing global economy, thousands of good jobs remain vacant across our state," said Granholm. "We will continue our intense job training and placement efforts, including the MI Opportunity Partnership, to ensure that unemployed citizens receive the training they need and are connected with the job vacancies that exist."

The Governor called on employers to invest in Michigan's future as a third pledge drive letter is being mailed out to more than 258,000 employers across the state. The letter, which once again asks employers to pledge existing job openings to the program, also highlights a number of expanded services provided by the Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG). DLEG oversees the MI Opportunity Partnership and is coordinating the pledge campaign.

"Employers pledging jobs are finding the qualified workers they need now to help their businesses grow and prosper," said Robert

W. Swanson, director of DLEG. "Michigan Works! Agencies are continuing to respond quickly to the thousands of employer pledges and requests for additional assistance to find workers."

Governor Urges Employers to Invest in Michigan by Pledging Job Openings

The state, in partnership with Michigan Works!, helps employers hire workers with the skills they are looking for. Professional staff at the more than 100 Michigan Works! offices across the state pre-screen workers, make appropriate referrals, provide information on training opportunities, and help both employers and workers use the Web-based Michigan Talent Bank.

"The unprecedented outreach to, and response from employers brought us success in year one," Swanson said. "Our intensive job placement services benefiting employers will help us achieve success in year two."

The MI Opportunity Partnership, introduced by Granholm in her 2005 State of the State message, is part of her comprehensive economic plan to create jobs, restructure and diversify Michigan's economy, change the state's business tax structure, expand access to higher education, and ensure that the state has a well-trained workforce.

Employers can pledge their job openings at www.michigan.gov/jobstoday or by calling 1-800-285-WORKS. They will automatically be connected to their local Michigan Works! service center.

Research Findings:

Parental Support of College-Aged Students with Learning Disabilities

How much parental support is enough and when is it too much? This is the basic question behind research conducted by Dr. Dawn Peterman Allred at MacMurray College in Illinois. She presented her research at the International Learning Disabilities Association Conference in Pittsburgh in February. Her research produced the following recommendations:

1. Support of an overwhelmed student in higher education should be specific to the situation; and, after resolution, the responsibility should be promptly returned to the student.
2. Parent support during the set-up stage of accommodations at the disability services center is advisable.
3. Too much support or no support of a student with a learning disability in higher education may be detrimental.

4. An awareness that documentation of an educational history of a learning disability is advisable to receive national testing accommodations or accommodations through the campus disability office.
5. Parent support and instruction to children at an early age in demystifying of disability, and in self-advocacy and self-determination skills is advisable.
6. Early acquisition of information about higher education placement options for students with learning disabilities and the legislation affecting students with disability in higher education should be increased.

MRS Collaborates with Education

MRS Division Director Sandra Peck worked with MDE-OSE/EIS' Core Planning Team throughout the year on Transition issues, including identification of useful models, supporting research and joint planning.

By participating in the Core Planning Team and Michigan's Transition Outcome Project (TOP) initiative, we...

- ✓ Promoted local MRS involvement at state TOP meetings and in local report out meetings.
- ✓ Participated in a national TOP IEP checklist review to improve quality of IEP throughout Michigan.
- ✓ MRS is represented at monthly Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) meetings and its Transition sub-committee (MRS representation as a non-voting member of the SEAC is required by law).
- ✓ MRS is represented at local Community Transition Council meetings and selected student conferences supported by Transition Grant funds throughout the state.
- ✓ MRS consultant acts as a liaison with professional associations related to disability and youth, such as the Michigan Association for Learning Disability Educators, Michigan Transition Services Association, Learning Disabilities Association (state and national), & the Council for Exceptional Children.
- ✓ MRS is represented on Career Preparation and Technical Education committees and presents at the annual Governor's Conference.

Link to Job Fairs...

To find job and career fairs throughout Michigan, click the link below:

http://www.michigan.gov/som/0,1607,7-192-29940_31988-60458-,00.html

NASDSE Satellite Conference Series

For more information see the OSE-EIS Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/ose-eis>

Save the Dates Events & Training

MARCH

Walk Wheel & Roll 2007

Sponsored by the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living
March 17, 2007 , 10 am - 2 pm

Eastern Michigan University's Bowen Field House, Ypsilanti.
More info at: <http://www.aacil.org/>

APRIL

Denise Bissonnette's Top 12 Employment Tools: The Art of Creating Opportunity, Part II

April 11, 2007, 9 am - 4 pm.

Sheraton Hotel, Lansing

For details and registration see: <http://www.miarp.org/>

Michigan Summit on Model High Schools

April 15-17, 2007

Grand Traverse Resort in Acme

www.michiganprincipals.org/conferencesandseminars

MAY

MI-AHEAD Conference

May 17 & 18, 2007

Radisson Hotel, Lansing, MI

More info coming soon: <http://www.mi-ahead.org>

Please forward or print this bulletin for others

E-mail your contributions or ideas for "Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth" to Lynn Boza:

bozal@michigan.gov or call 517/241-3957.

To subscribe, contact Lynn Boza as above.

Views expressed in Monday Bulletin articles are not necessarily the views of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth nor Michigan Rehabilitation Services.