

Branching Out News

May 15, 2008

Issue 9

Message from the CEO: Melissa Gourley

Employee of the Month

April – Caring Stewart – Caring is an extremely dedicated and hard working employee. Caring recently changed sites and has been an essential asset to her new team. Caring is always willing to fill-in and assist with last minute appointments and changes. Caring is a team player and is admired by her peers. Caring has established great relationships with each of the individuals she works with. Thank you, Caring for all your hard work and for being such a team player! We are honored to have you as a part of the UPREACH family. For being employee of the month, Caring will receive an extra vacation day.

Do you know someone you think should be employee of the month?

Let your supervisor know all the great things your coworkers are doing to improve the lives of the individuals we serve.

Special Recognition

We (Beth, Susan and I) would like to give special thanks to everyone that assisted us while we were away at our conference and out on our vacations. We are so lucky to have such a great team that we can rely on and feel confident that everything will be taken care of. We would like to give an extra thanks to the following individuals. Pat Selbe, for being our fearless leader and always taking that extra step to ensure that things are being taken care of, Charlene Shoveler, for always working so diligently and showing such dedication, Tammy Boker for always making sure everything is running as smoothly as possible and working endlessly without a single complaint, Beth and Rick for always providing the best medical attention you could have asked for, Pat Gourley for his continued diligence for filling opened shifts and having great ideas to better our company, and last but not least, Jackie for taking care of everyone at the office and ensuring that things run smoothly. A million thanks to all of you, we couldn't have dreamed of a better team. We hope that you all remain a part of our lives for years and years to come. We love you all very much!

Employee Appreciation (REMINDER)

We know we often get busy and forget to thank you for all your hard work and dedication. So to show you how much you are all appreciated we are offering free chair massage every Friday from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm. We will offer ten minute sessions, so time is limited. If you are interested, please Contact Jackie or Sheryl to reserve a time. And again, thank you for being a part of the UPREACH family. Please make sure you take time to treat yourself.

Nurse Department

by Beth Snider/Rick Tucker

Congratulations! Job Well Done!

We want to take this opportunity to congratulate staff on the great improvements in medication documentation. Your attention to detail makes all the difference in providing excellent care to our consumers. Keep up the great work. You Rock!

A reminder to review the warm weather safety information provided to lead staff/managers during a recent lead meeting. This information is beneficial for everyone to apply in their work situation; as well as, their private lives, to have a great healthy summer. If you have not read and signed-off having read this information, ask your supervisor.

Please be certain to review the expiration dates on PRN medications to make sure they have not expired, before the need arises. Let Rick know if any medications need destroyed and refilled. 442-7702, ext #224. Thanks for your continued cooperation in these matters.

NURSING CERTIFICATION CLASSES

MAY 14TH & MAY 21ST
June 11th & June 18th

ALL CLASSES ARE SCHEDULED
9:30 AM – 4:30 PM

CYCLE FILL DATES

May 28, 2008
June 25, 2008

ANNUAL UPREACH PICNIC MANDATORY STAFF MEETING

Friday, June 20, 2008

Join us for an All Staff-Mandatory Meeting and Upreach Picnic. As in the past we will have the meeting 10 am-12 pm then the picnic 12 pm – 2 pm. this is a “pot-luck” so bring a dish to share. We will have games to play and fun for everyone. Staff will need to pick their check (for that week) at this time too.

News from Human Resource Dept. by Susan Sadauskas

May Anniversaries

Brian Abel	1 year
Amad Fontie	4 years
Eric Ndossi	1 year
Aimee Quelette	1 year
Angelo Veal	2 years

Just a quick note to remind everyone that as summer approaches we are getting more and more requests for time off. Please turn in your requests early & remember – **it is your responsibility to call to make sure that your time off request is approved.** If your request is not approved, please be patient with us. Any questions regarding time off please contact Susan.

Reminder – If you need to meet with one of us please call ahead of time to make sure we will be in the office. We are not always available to meet with you immediately, as we have other meetings and appointments scheduled. Your best bet is to call and schedule an appointment.

Dates to Remember

CPR - First Aid
May 5th and May 19th
June 2nd & June 16th
9:30am - 5pm

Lead Meeting
May 28th
10:15 AM

Thought of the Month

By Beth Swegheimer

One's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions

Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go

DID YOU KNOW?

According to Century 21.com, May 1st weekend is traditionally the biggest moving day of the year.

May is also *Creative Beginnings Month*. Doing something Creative can be a great tool for releasing stress and building self-confidence.

Looking for cheapest gas prices? Go to gasbuddy.com

NEWS FROM THE PAYROLL DEPT.

by Pat Gourley

Accessing Vacation/Personal/Sick Days

Please remember that there is a proper procedure in accessing your personal/vacation/sick time. All requests must be submitted to Susan. A 14-day notice is required if requesting 1 or 2 consecutive days off. A 30-day notice is required when requesting 3-10 consecutive days. If you are sick and you use a day of vacation/sick/personal time, you must submit a PLA request along with your time sheet. You can not write in the number of hours you are requesting on your time sheet and not submit a PLA request form.

Additionally, you must indicate on your time sheet vacation/personal/sick time. As we approach the summer months when many staff take vacation time it is important that you get your requests in as soon as possible. Remember, vacation time is granted on "first come" basis. If there are many staff requesting the same week, we will take a look at the dates when the requests was turned in and grant the time accordingly to the earliest date. If you have questions, please call me.

Suggestion-Box

We have installed a suggestion box in the copy room at the office. We encourage you when you come to the office to drop a suggestion or an idea in the box. The box is locked. There are suggestions cards on the box to fill out. You don't need to put your name on the suggestion card if you don't want to, however if we use your suggestion, you will be rewarded. We value your opinion and we are interested in your suggestions and ideas to make UPREACH a great place to work.

Staff Reminder

Our offices will be closed on Monday May 26th for the Memorial Day Holiday. All paper work must be turned-in by 12 noon on Tuesday May 27th. Remember, we do have a mail box in front of our building that you can drop off your paperwork anytime day or night.

IF WE DO NOT HAVE ALL THE PAPER WORK BY 12 NOON ON TUESDAY MAY 27TH – YOU WILL NOT BE PAID.

Thank you.

INSPIRATIONAL WORDS

by Bruce Doolin

10 Things To Do To Help Stop Global Warming.

- 1. Change a Light.** Compact fluorescent light bulb will save 150 lbs of carbon dioxide a year
- 2. Drive Less.** You can save one pound of carbon dioxide for every mile you don't drive.
- 3. Recycle More Save** Save 2,400 lbs of carbon dioxide per yr by recycling just half of your household waste.
- 4. Check Your Tires.** Improve gas mileage by 3% by keeping tires inflated properly. Every gallon of gasoline saved keeps 20 lbs of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.
- 5. Use Less Hot Water.** Save 350 lbs of CO₂ per year by installing a low flow showerhead and 500 lbs of CO₂ per year by washing your clothes in cold or warm water.
- 6. Avoid Products with a lot of packaging.** Save 1,200 lbs of CO₂ by cutting down garbage by 10%.
- 7. Adjust Your Thermostat.** You can save 2,000 lbs of carbon dioxide by moving your thermostat down 2 degrees in the winter and 2 degrees up in the summer.
- 8. Plant a Tree.** A single tree will absorb one ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime
- 9. Turn off Electronic Devices** Turn off TVs, DVD players, stereos, and computers when not in use and save thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide a year.
- 10. Spread The Word!**

From *aninconvenienttruth*

STAFF AND AGENCY by Pat Gourley

We want to thank all of our staff who took the time to fill out the staff survey. Although we did not have an overwhelming response, we were able to collect some valuable information. All of our staff was given the opportunity to evaluate many areas of the company. We want to share with you some of the results of the survey. At the same time the staff was taking a survey, we also asked the parents and guardians to evaluate our agency. I will share with you some of those results as well. We have to believe that the majority of the staff that did not respond either had no opinion about the company, or for the most part must be satisfied working for UPREACH. In fact, 60% of those responding said that they were satisfied working for UPREACH. 24% had no opinion one way or the other.

In the area of training, we asked the staff if they were satisfied with the training they were given. 98% said they were satisfied. The staff made some great recommendations on how we could improve training. The Human Resources Department will be taking a look at some of those recommendations and will be enhancing our training as we move forward. Currently, we have enhanced the MUI training and very shortly will be enhancing the OSHA Compliance Training. Some of the staff indicated that they would like the training department to offer training modules in leadership, behavior and redirection techniques, communication, fire safety, team building and personal skills development. The staff that has been with the company for awhile may not know that we do offer a course within our training workshop on behavior techniques. If you would like a CD on the behavior module along with a handout, please let us know and we will provide it for you. Delegated Nursing is a requirement for all staff. Most of our staff has been through Delegated Nursing. All new staff that is hired is required to attend those classes and all new staff is immediately enrolled in CPR/First Aid.

The Human Resources Department is going to continue to look at ways of improving our benefits. Susan is always evaluating the Medical/Dental benefits. We are looking at ways to improve promotional opportunities within our company. We are going to work with our lead staff developing them in professional growth opportunities. Building team spirit, recognition and communication were areas of concern for the staff. UPREACH has always been committed to be the best in the way we treat our consumers and staff. We want to know your ideas on how to build team spirit and how we recognize good performance in the company. We want to find ways to communicate with you so you will feel "in the loop" and not "out there" all alone. One of the ways is our monthly newsletter. In our newsletter, we recognize the employee of the month and recognize anniversary dates. We try to communicate other news about the company to you. Program Managers hold monthly meetings at their sites. We have monthly Lead Staff Meetings to communicate with the "leads" in order for them to bring back to the site pertinent information. If you have other ideas on how to better communicate with you, please let us know.

We would like to tell you about three new ways we are going to improve communication to you.

1. We have installed a suggestion box in our office that will enable you to offer suggestions and ideas. The suggestion box is locked and is located in the copy room. We want to continue to listen to what you have to say about UPREACH. Please place your ideas and suggestions in that box. No need to put your name on it. All comments are treated as confidential. If you would like to get credit and recognition for your ideas, then by all means put your name on the suggestion card.
2. Some of you may not know that we have a website. You can access the website at www.upreachgroup.com. We are going to add a new page to the website called, "STAFF NEWS" Go to that link and click on "STAFF NEWS" There you will find the current newsletter, the current calendar, additional news, articles, pictures, etc. There are links to all administrative staff emails. You can email anyone by clicking on their email and you can send them a confidential message. No one else will see the email.
3. Every Sunday Sherryl, our office assistant, goes from site to site to collect Paperwork and deliver supplies to you. Sherryl will be placing memos, job Opportunities, flyers, etc. in the staff communication log. Those sites that Sherryl Does not collect, we will mail out to you that information.

Staff and agency continued.....

We will continue to look at ways that we can communicate with you. It is always a two-way street when it comes to communication-if you don't take the time to read the newsletter, read the staff communication log, or communicate with your Program Managers or the Administrative staff your voice is not heard and you will feel "out of the loop."

When staff say they are "not appreciated" or they are "not recognized", we need to understand what it is that staff needs to feel appreciated and recognized. We have the Employee of the Month program in place. We give Christmas bonuses to all staff that are out of their probationary period. We offer chair massages every Friday. We work with our staff in many small ways to help them with problems and concerns, scheduling conflicts, etc. UPREACH appreciates all you do for our consumers and all your hard work.

Agency Survey

We were very happy with the information we gathered from the Agency Survey. The survey was sent out to all parents and guardians. Most of the parents and guardians are satisfied with the services that UPREACH provides. In fact, 100% were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with our services. There were some concerns that I want to share with you. Please remember that when you ask people for their opinions, we as a company need to take a look at ourselves and be willing to change if it is warranted. Here are the comments in a nutshell.

UPREACH needs to do a better job in shadowing new staff. New staff needs to understand "house rules" and review the ISP before going into a consumer's home.

Staff needs to be better trained in areas regarding health and nutrition. Staff needs to push harder in getting the consumer to eat a well balanced diet. Staff needs to be better trained in health issues such as diabetes, seizures, etc. Human Resources Department will be looking at ways that we can address the above issues. As always, if you have comments and suggestions that you would like to offer, please place them in the suggestion box.

We ask the parents and guardians to evaluate our staff on a variety of characteristics. The number one characteristic that the parents and guardians said the staff lacked was creativity. Staff needs to be better in creating ways consumers can enhance their lives through recreational activities. Additionally, staff needs to be creative in helping consumers make healthy choices. The spring and summer are excellent times to grill out or go to the park and have a picnic. Communication was a concern from the parents and guardians. Staff needs to interact more with parents and guardians. Being outgoing, friendly and confident when you are talking with the parent or guardian when working with the consumer will help bridge this perception of not communicating with them. Additionally, we will be sending them the newsletter. The last issues that we need to address as an agency is that our staff need to be better role models for the company. We are concerned as an agency in the way some staff represent themselves to the parents and guardians. As outlined in the last newsletter to you, we have staff showing up in pajamas and slippers, showing up in scrubs, showing up in muscle shirts, halter tops, inappropriate slacks and shirts and showing up with "marks" on one's neck. Ask yourself this, "would I let my son or daughter go out with staff that looks like they just got out of bed?" "Would I allow my son or daughter to go out with staff who dresses in an immodest way?" Please be aware of the way you dress and your appearance standards when working with our consumers. Remember, the way you dress could trigger behaviors in our consumers. So there it is in a nutshell. We can look at the survey results and do nothing, or we can take what we have learned and make this company a better place to work for all of us. The above is only a summary of the survey. If you have any questions or comments regarding this information, please talk to your Program Manager, or the Administrative staff.

Consumer of the Month



STARLENE BEARD

Starlene is our consumer of the month for May. Star, as she is known by her 2 housemates, friends and staff, is a very sweet person. Star recently moved from her home of 10 years with little to no problems. She loves her new home especially her bedroom. Star retired from Arc Industries North after 26 yrs. and now attends Sage Crosswoods. She likes shopping, especially dollar stores and doing arts and crafts, working on her ABC's, cook-outs, the comics in the Sunday paper. She also enjoys watching her favorite shows Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune, Oprah and old movies. Her favorite thing is going on visits and weekend stays with her extended family. Star's best friend is "Boo - Hoo"! She recently went on a vacation with a group of other consumers to Dollywood and had a great time.