



RICHMOND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Fall 2009 Newsletter

WHEN THINGS GET TOUGH THE TOUGH GET GOING

Message from Edward Spauster, Ph.D. President & CEO

Yes, times are hard and Richmond, along with thousands of other non-profits across the country, is dealing with the twin challenges of rising demand for its services and reduced resources due to state budget cuts and reduced philanthropy.

But the message that is being shaped by our proactive responses to the current climate is that we're developing new programs, gaining new partners, attracting more volunteers and increasing our knowledge base. So thank you Richmond employees, donors, volunteers, friends and families for hanging tough and paving the way for cheerier messages in the not-too-distant future.

For example, the successful launch of our Wheels on Wheels initiative is putting an end to waits of one-month or longer for the repair of a damaged wheelchair. Instead, it is raising realistic hopes that each chair can be restored to its former – or even better – working order within days. I'm very excited about our new partnership with the Finger Lakes School of Massage, which is providing therapeutic massages for individuals in our Mount Kisco programs. And, I am pleased by the growing number of employees who merit Quality

Matters awards for their performances. Their creative and "above the call of duty" responses to current hurdles clearly reveal a confident "bring it on" attitude that is contagious and encouraging.

From a personal point of view, I am very excited by my recent election as president-elect of the New York Chapter of American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and my appointment to the Policy Analysis Committee of the New York State Association of Community and Residential Agencies (NYSACRA). This will get Richmond more involved in statewide activities, provide us with new sources of information and potential partners, and bring our accomplishments to the attention of others in the field. Jacqui Phillips, our Director of Quality Management and Staff Training and Development, has also become involved in NYSACRA activities, so we are both looking forward to valuable information gathering and sharing.

Lively FunFest Event

at 919 North Broadway on June 7 Generates Tangible (\$\$) and Intangible (😊) Benefits

Explore Our Exciting, New Website!

For details, see page 4

They had fun, ate great party food, made new friends, raised money for needed programs and therapies, and developed a better understanding of what Richmond is all about.

And that pretty much sums up what happened when 300 people participated in the agency's 26th Annual FunFest in June at 919 North Broadway.

"It was a great success – and from every point of view," said Carol Baron, who coordinated the event. "The money we raised will be invaluable in filling in the gaps between what Medicaid pays for our programs and therapies and what is really needed."

"Another benefit was having the individuals we support and their parents simultaneously enjoying the festivities. It's always extremely gratifying to see families having fun together," said Elyse Allbee, Manager of Recreation and Volunteers.



Yaasmeen enjoying this year's FunFest.

Community Service Brings Joy to Richmond Plus More Students and Volunteers from the Business Sector

A look at the faces of residents at 919 North Broadway during a visit of area high school students is all that's required to justify Manager of Recreation and Volunteers Elyse Allbee's efforts to recruit schools and area businesses as Day of Community Service partners.

"Our residents literally beam when they see a familiar face entering their rooms ready to do Karaoke, play music, dance, assist in art activities or play games with them," Allbee noted. "They know they'll be having fun with a person familiar to them and they like getting attention from people other than their caregivers and family."

The students who eagerly come to Richmond sites are enjoying the interplay because more are giving their time and energy to its programs — and more schools are establishing links with the agency to create scheduled visits.

Schools, businesses and community organizations interested in providing volunteers to Richmond should contact Elyse Allbee at 914-968-1900, ext. 5080.

Philanthropic Culture Throughout Richmond Starting to Pay Dividends in Form of Creative Fund Raising Events

Who said leadership should only come from the top of an organization?

The creation of a philanthropic culture at Richmond led to the shaping of a successful rock concert that generated funds for a wheelchair accessible playground at the Goldman House in Bedford and is raising hopes that other equally productive ventures will be in the agency's future thanks to ideas from staff members. And families. And friends of the organization.

"We want to create a mindset throughout Richmond that philanthropy is everyone's concern and ideas for helping us attract new funds will always be welcome," says Paula Barbag, Director of Marketing and Development. "So our Liz Donaldson's energy and persistence in producing the successful July 24 rock concert is a perfect example of how everyone affiliated with Richmond can positively influence our fund raising efforts."

A house manager at Goldman House in Bedford, Donaldson arranged to have her stepdaughter and other performers at the Saw Mill Summer Theater company provide an evening of rock music at the Pleasantville Jewish Community Center. Members of Richmond's Board of Directors and the RCS Foundation Board of Directors made financial contributions so that individuals served by the agency and their aides could attend.



Liz Donaldson and her valued teammate, Elizabeth Krause.

Staff with ideas for other fund raising activities are invited to call Paula Barbag at 914-471-4131 or email her at pbarbag@richmondcommserv.org

Play Ball!

89 Day Program Participants Happily Do So As Richmond Joins Miracle League of Westchester

Joey has his turn at bat as he steadies himself with his walker and gets some added assistance from Karine Edwards, Direct Support Professional



Ranging in age from early twenties to mid-fifties, 89 day program participants are hitting, fielding and in some cases running as participants in the Miracle League of Westchester this year.

They're part of a four-year-old program designed to let people with disabilities enjoy baseball to the fullest extent of their capabilities while developing friendships with men and women from other agencies.

"Most importantly, they're having a great time," said MOVE® Program Supervisor Shannon Shapiro. "They're getting good exercise, socializing, learning about teamwork and competition, and feeling that they are participating in community life by interacting with others who live in Westchester."

The baseball games, held twice a week at Ridge Road Park in Hartsdale, are played on an adapted baseball field built by the county that has a rubberized, cushioned turf. With coaches on the field to participate, some of the men and women play in wheelchairs, some stand in gait trainers and some walk to home plate themselves and hit either a pitched ball or one on a stand.

Caring Donors and Friends

Gather For Fun and Charity at Annual Golf Outing



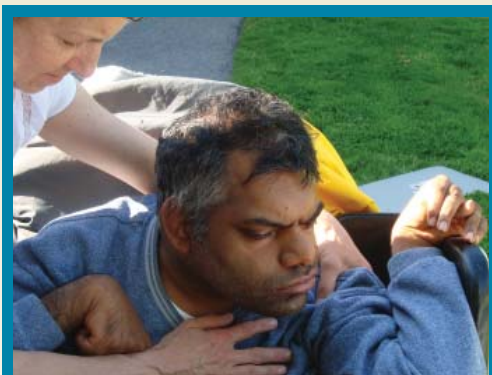
(Left to right) Irwin Miller and Mike Rozen.

"It was my old friend Irwin Miller who first told me about Richmond. But it was my visit to the residence at 919 North Broadway in Yonkers that clinched the deal for me," said Mike Rozen, donor and participant at the 6th Annual "Give through Golf" Outing at Old Westbury Golf & Country Club.

Talking over the joyful chatter at the post-tournament dinner, he added, "Anyone who sees the amazing job Richmond is doing can't help but be captivated. I'm thrilled to see the next generation, including my daughter, Nancy Feibus, becoming involved with Richmond."

The money raised at this year's golf outing, co-chaired by John Cory and Susan and Stu Goldman of Old Westbury, will be used to support cutting edge services for the individuals in our programs, said Carol Baron, senior development officer.

Pleasurable Community Experiences Are Brought into Yonkers Residence



Shankar, normally quite tense, now welcomes getting his massages.

Richmond is building connections with the community at a faster pace than ever thanks in large part to the recent \$100,000 in contributions from Ravi Sarma and his colleagues at Tower Research-Capital. Sarma, whose brother is a resident at Richmond, serves on the Richmond Community Services Foundation Board of Directors.

"What a joy it is to see the increasing stimulation and pleasure individuals at our 919 North Broadway residence are experiencing from the new therapeutic recreation programs, spa services, art and music programs we've been able to bring in-house," said Diane Yesko, Richmond's new community liaison.

"Through an artful combination of paid and volunteer services we've been successfully drawing on, the individuals we support are experiencing such services as manicures, therapeutic massages, hair cutting, art therapy and music therapy," she said.

Additional Contributions Received

Other new contributions received this year include gifts from Futures and Options, TD Bank, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and East Yonkers Rotary.

Two Important Additions to Richmond

Joseph R. Pugni, Jr., long-time Richmond volunteer and donor, is now a member of the Richmond Community Services Foundation Board. He is also co-chair of the Oct. 3 wine tasting fundraiser.

"We are delighted that we are now even more directly benefitting from Joe's ingenuity and dedication to helping us raise private donations so critical to our cutting edge programs," said David Brenner, Chairman of the Board. "He did a great job as co-chair of last year's successful wine tasting. I know that he's working hard to ensure equally positive results this October!"

Andrew S. Kaplan, the agency's new Vice President of Financial Services and CFO, heads a staff of 11 in overseeing Richmond's financial matters.

"We are benefiting from Andy's more than 20 years' experience in finance – and his certification as an enrolled agent by the IRS," said Ed Spauster, President and CEO.



Joseph R. Pugni, Jr.



Andrew S. Kaplan

Quality Matters Program Helps RCS Soar to New Heights As Staff Members Perform Above the Call of Duty



Explore Our Exciting, New Website!

www.richmondcommserv.org

Vibrantly re-designed, our new website is easy to navigate! You'll learn about — and see! — the innovation, dedication and expertise Richmond's family-like support provides. AND learn about the many ways you can derive pleasure from being part of the action.

Go to the "contact us" page to share your feedback on the site, which we will update frequently to keep you current on the exciting events happening at Richmond!



The recent dedication of members of the Richmond maintenance staff in the construction of the new "Home in a Home" at 919 North Broadway made a huge difference to individuals at Richmond.

Quality matters.

And because it does throughout the organization, individuals supported by Richmond are benefiting from the staff's intensified desire to "go the extra mile," **and** internal training programs are being enhanced by case studies of innovative employees making positive differences.

"Those are the reasons why we instituted a Quality Matters" program in 2007," said Debbie Mediate, LMSW, Quality Improvement and Performance Manager. "We not only want to recognize employees who add to the quality of people's lives, we also want to make awareness of quality and a desire to add to it 'standard operating procedure' throughout the organization."

It's working. Since the program's inception, some 80 staff members have been nominated for Quality Matter awards.

Included among the examples of quality above Richmond's high performance norms are the nurse who came in on a holiday weekend to administer medication and provide personal care to an individual receiving chemotherapy, staff members who drove day program participants to Pennsylvania for a vacation, a maintenance person who has been going out of his way to keep 919 Broadway spotless, and a woman who conceived "Dessert Night at Richmond."