



THE TWENTY



***This Month: Resolve Behavioral Health Services,
Special Education, Nonpublic School Services***

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Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

March 2011

Pleasant Valley High School Emotional Support Class Builds Empathy and Teamwork

BY MARYLUE TEKIN, Special Education Teacher/Resolve



Pictured are Pleasant Valley School District students and staff: Back Row: L-R: Karen Pfefferkorn, IU 20 Associate Teacher; Shannah Shoopack, IU 20 Substitute; Maurice Bush; Jonathan Betancourt; Jania Weasner, IU 20 Associate Teacher; Bryan Villaruel; Andrew Rutkowski; Ashlee Grennan, IU 20 Substitute; and Ginny Carangelo, IU 20 Mental Health Worker. Front Row: L-R: Jerry Iovino; Darquise Harper; Amy Reichard; and Corey Costenbader. Missing from the picture are Brandon Daddea and Frankie Ross, who also participated in the activity.

For the past four school years, Mrs. Tekin's Emotional Support (ES) students at Pleasant Valley High School have shared activities and experiences with the Autistic Support class. The staff in both classrooms dictated which activities would be completed and organized and supplied all of the needed materials.

This year, in an effort to develop empathy, leadership, and teamwork skills, the staff decided to have the ES students take ownership by organizing and implementing the activities that they felt would benefit the Autistic students. In October, the Autistic Support Teacher, Mrs. Taylor, conducted a group lesson which explained Autism. The students then needed to decide which activities the Autistic students might enjoy, as well as what supplies would be needed. The students organized four stations and provided the needed materials for the activities that the ES students would help the Autistic students complete. These stations included coloring, a simple Halloween craft, decorating Halloween cupcakes, and playing Halloween games.

In November, the students decided that they would like to have a Thanksgiving meal with the Autistic Support class. They created a list of needed foods and which foods each student and staff member would provide. The day before their Thanksgiving break, the ES students made the food and shared a Thanksgiving Feast with the Autistic Support students and staff.

Both activities were extremely rewarding for all involved and the students learned a great deal. They are looking forward to completing one activity each month with the students in the Autistic Support classroom.

Executive Director's Message

BY DR. CHARLENE M. BRENNAN

The Twenty for March

In an effort to reach out to all of our local school district board members, the Intermediate Unit has embarked on an initiative to conduct an Orientation to the Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 via technology! Called Orientation to Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, this five part live webinar series allows you to engage real-time with our staff and IU board members as we provide information about the Intermediate Unit and our services.

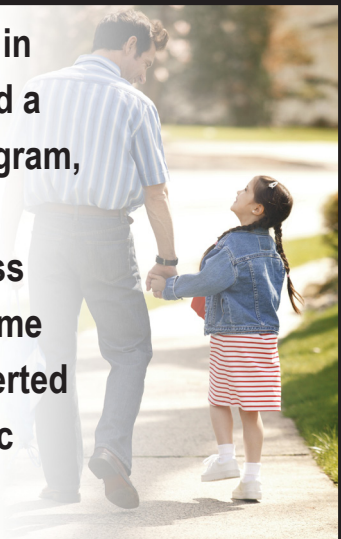
Our first session in the series, an overview of all the intermediate unit programs, was held in February and recorded, so if you missed it you can access the recording on the CIU 20 website at www.ciu20.org. Session 2, Background-Statistics-Governance, is being held during this month's IU board meeting on March 23 and we are hopeful that you can join us. If not, again we will record the session and post it to our website.

On April 27, we will conduct Session 3, Intermediate Unit Finances; on May 25, we will conduct Session 4 on Colonial Academy; and on June 25, we will conduct a session, which we do not quite have a name for yet, but will explore the similarities and differences between intermediate units and school districts.

We hope you can join us from home for our webinar series live during the session and if not that you try to access the recording when you can. If you need directions for connecting or more information on the webinar series, you can call me anytime at my office at 610-515-6402.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

**when students are placed in
therapeutic foster care and a
partial hospitalization program,
many students are able to
retain their ability to access
their education in their home
school district and be diverted
from needing a therapeutic
residential level of care.**



Early Intervention Department to Hold Family Resource Night

BY BECKY ELLER AND ANN RIDER, *Supervisors of Special Education*

The Early Intervention Department at CIU 20 will provide an opportunity for families to learn about and sign up for valuable programs such as Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Medical Assistance (MA) for children with disabilities. Information regarding insurance programs for children, especially children utilizing intermediate unit services, will be provided at this Family Resource Night on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. The program will be held at CIU 20 at 6 Danforth Drive, Easton, PA.

CHIP is short for the Children's Health Insurance Program - Pennsylvania's program to provide health insurance to all uninsured children and teens that are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance. There are a lot of reasons kids might not have health insurance - maybe their parents lost a job, do not have health insurance at work or maybe it just costs too much. Whatever the reason, CHIP may be able to help. All families need to do is apply.

Medical Assistance has the broadest coverage of medical and mental health services for persons under 18 of any insurance plan. It covers services rarely covered by employer provided insurance such as Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services ("wraparound"), in-home shift nursing (two hours or more per day), in-home personal care services, diapers, nutritional supplements, prescriptions and transportation to and from medical appointments. It also covers services, like in-home nursing, physical, speech or occupational therapy, without annual or lifetime caps often imposed by other insurance plans. Medical Assistance can be a child's only insurance or it can be secondary to other coverage, covering those services or equipment not covered by the child's primary insurance.

Interested attendees should RSVP to 610-515-6468 with the number of attendees by March 28, 2011.

Resolve Behavioral Health Services Awarded CareerLinking Academy Grant

BY RON PRATOR, Ph.D., *Supervisor of Quality Assurance, Resolve*

For the fourth consecutive year, the CIU 20 Resolve Behavioral Health Services department was awarded a grant through the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board (LVWIB) to conduct a CareerLinking Academy. The project is scheduled to begin on March 1st and will continue with weekly events until the end of May.

The CareerLinking Academy is a "career readiness" curriculum that takes high school students through the process of identifying a career of interest and developing the skills needed to enter this chosen field. Students start the 11 week curriculum by completing a Career Interest Inventory. Then, they receive a minimum of three hours of individual career counseling to explain the results of this inventory. Based on the counseling sessions, students will choose a career that is of interest to them. They will then research their occupation to find out specific information, such as average salary, required training, work conditions, and state/national projections for openings.

Students will be scheduled to attend sessions that teach skills related to writing a cover letter, completing applications, writing a resume, interviewing skills, and developing a personal budget.

Much of the CareerLinking Academy is community-based. Fortunately, there are a number of community partners that are willing to host students, including Touchstone Theatre, Martin Guitar, North Star Adventure, Coca Cola, Northampton Community College, and the Ben Franklin Center.

A total of 15 high school students from the Emotional Support Program located at Easton Area High School have been selected to be part of the Academy.

It is believed that the students who complete this program are better positioned to transition from high school into adult life and are better prepared to pursue and fulfill their career aspirations.

Therapy Dog Lends a Hand (Uhh, Paw) to Paxinosa Emotional Support Students

BY ERIKA WERNER, *Treatment Coordinator, Resolve Emotional Support Program*

The students in the Resolve Emotional Support classrooms at Paxinosa Elementary School have had a special visitor throughout the course of this school year. She is not the typical teacher you would expect to find in a classroom; however, she does carry some very special qualities that have left a positive impact on the students. Her name is Tinkerbelle and she is a therapy dog.

Tinkerbelle is a rescue dog, having made her home in Easton after leaving South Carolina. She persevered through therapy school, despite her own adversity of missing an eye. She has been a certified therapy dog for three years, and has been visiting the students at Paxinosa since the start of the 2009-2010 school year. The Emotional Support students have come to look forward to her bi-weekly sessions, fondly referred to as "Tink Time." During Tink Time, the students learn about various breeds of dogs by reading and answering questions. Additionally, they get the opportunity to practice positive social skills, such as turn-taking, following directions, active listening, joining an activity, and improving communication skills, all of which can be a challenge for these students at one time or another. Tinkerbelle also models positive behaviors for the students. She is expected to follow the directives of her owner, participate in the session, and demonstrate patience when eager for her treats.

The classroom staff members have identified many benefits from having



Pictured are students Robert Holland (Pen Argyl School District), Sara Katinis (Easton Area School District), and Tinkerbelle's Owner, Mrs. Fisher.

Tinkerbelle serve as a classroom support. The students have demonstrated an increase in self-confidence, strive to reach their personal classroom goals, learned compassion as they have seen Tinkerbelle manage her own disabilities, and acknowledge differences in others as Tinkerbelle is non-judgmental towards the students. The students look forward to the time they get to spend with Tinkerbelle, and this has led to improved work quality. Lastly, and not to be overlooked, is the encouragement Tinkerbelle provides the students to have fun. The smiles she leaves on the faces of these students as she ends her visit is incredible.

For more information concerning CIU-20 Programs and Services, visit our website at www.ciu20.org or contact:

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Two Colonial Academy Students Earn Medals at SkillsUSA Competition

BY BILL VITULLI, *Principal of Colonial Academy*

On February 3rd, 2011, three students from Colonial Academy competed among 400 students from Lehigh, Monroe, Northampton, and Bucks counties and came away winners. Amber Taylor-Degroat, Juan Cruz, and Luis Santos took part in the annual SkillsUSA competition that was held in Allentown.

Amber Taylor-Degroat, a junior from the East Stroudsburg Area School District, received a silver medal for her culinary arts demonstration. Juan Cruz, a senior from Bethlehem Area School District, won the bronze carpentry-related demonstration. Lastly, Luis Santos, from Pocono Mountain School District, took a 7th place, also in a culinary arts demonstration.

SkillsUSA Council is a non-profit organization that was created in 1985 to foster active business education partnerships in order to prepare students for careers. The Council serves more than 6,000 career and technical education students in District 11 each year.

The SkillsUSA Council provides cutting-edge training that prepares students for the rapidly changing skills demanded in the workplace. The Council develops citizenship, leadership, employability, and occupational skills through career-focused education and industry partnerships.

Overall, CIU 20 is very proud of the students' performance and is grateful for the dedicated staff that supports them.



Mr. Mark Franczak, Construction Management Teacher, and Juan Cruz (Bethlehem Area School District).

Two Insights into the World of Visual Impairment

BY SEAN LeDONNE, *Supervisor of Special Education*

Ryan Carsey and Alison Leroza, Freedom High School seniors, presented an informational program addressing the struggles and successes of being a visually impaired learner on December 20, 2010. With the support of CIU 20 Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Courtney Parry, and Bethlehem Area School District teacher, Craig Webber, the students developed a multimedia presentation to share with their audience. In attendance were students from Freedom High School and district middle schools, teachers, school board members, agency representatives and administrators from Bethlehem Area School District and CIU 20.

The program began with the Van Morrison song, "Dweller on the Threshold," which Ryan believed helped to display the struggles that people face on a daily basis. Lyrics to the song were provided to the audience in print and Braille format. A 20 minute video was shown, where under the guidance of Ryan and Alison, sighted students were put through exercises that simulated visual impairment.

Both Ryan and Alison individually spoke to the group about their struggles and accomplishments. Both students participated in extra-curricular activities throughout high school and intend to further their education in college. They spoke of using the amount of sight they have to the best of their ability and their drive to succeed. It was an inspirational message for not only the younger students in attendance with visual impairments, but the entire audience as well.

The audience members were then broken up into small groups for discussion of guided questions developed by the students. The questions focused on what it would be like to be a person with a visual impairment and how it would impact their life. Following the discussions, light refreshments were served and the opportunity was provided for those in attendance to meet and talk to the students. Guests at the program received ornaments and Braille cards made by the visually impaired students. Cards and ornaments were also sent to the school board members.

Ryan and Allison, under the guidance of Mrs. Parry, coordinated the event, including meeting with and composing emails to district administrators, scanning and embossing the song lyrics and developing the video and PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Webber's students also assisted with the video presentation. This process allowed Ryan and Allison to generalize their skill with assistive technology while presenting to the community.

This well received presentation enlightened students and staff who may not have known much about students with visual impairments.

CIU 20 Part of Rapid Response Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services Training

BY KEN SMITH, *Treatment Coordinator for Resolve Provider 50 Services*

CIU 20 will be part of a two year training program leading to the development of a new community-based therapeutic service called Rapid Response Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS). It often goes by other names like Brief Treatment or Brief BHRS, but the main goal of this program is to provide immediate services to clients and families in need without the typical wait associated with other therapeutic services.

The Rapid Response BHRS program will serve Monroe and Pike Counties and was made possible by reinvestment dollars obtained through Managed Care's involvement within the Monroe and Pike County region. All staff providing this service will have completed an extensive two-year-long training provided by the Philadelphia Child Guidance Center and has demonstrated expertise in the area of individual and family therapy. Projected to start in April

2011, the Rapid Response BHRS is the first phase in the expected expansion of this type of service. Plans are in place to train additional staff in order to meet the potential needs of the community, and all staff providing these services will receive ongoing extensive clinical consultation.

Unlike traditional Provider 50 services, Rapid Response BHRS will only have one Master's Level Clinician provide services without the support of Bachelor's Level Therapeutic Staff Support. Rapid Response BHRS is solely funded by Pennsylvania's Medical Assistance Programs and is not approved by any private insurance agencies. Rapid Response BHRS is not available in Northampton and Lehigh Counties.

If you have further questions regarding the Rapid Response BHRS program, please call Ken Smith Treatment Coordinator at (610) 515-6469.

Class Brightens Holiday for Veterans

BY LINDSEY VOGEL, Secretary, Special Education



Novella Babb from the Pocono Mountain School District displays her placemat, made for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

In December, students in Debbie Gladd's Life Skills Class at Pocono Mountain East Junior High School worked to make the holidays more special for hospitalized Veterans at the Wilkes-Barre Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Ms. Gladd and Speech Therapist, Dan Wright thought it was important for the students to learn the gift of giving, and there is no better time to teach giving back than during the holiday season. Teaching students to be compassionate and concerned for others can be a challenge, but immediately, the students understood and were eager to help.

The students worked for nearly two weeks to make 75 placemats for the Veterans. They were given paper, holiday cutouts, art supplies and templates to construct and decorate the placemats, with some assistance from Associate Teacher, Lynn Morri and Mental Health Worker, Lauren Garafola. The Junior High School laminated all 75 placemats. Then, the placemats were delivered to the Medical Center in time to be used for the holidays.

The Veterans were extremely grateful for the students' thoughtfulness. Ms. Gladd's class received a letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs in January thanking the students for their concern and compassion. The students learned a valuable lesson this holiday season, the true joy in "giving back."

Revolutionary Thinking . . . Makes A Difference

Nazareth ASD and CIU 20 Collaborate on Institute for Growing Learners

BY JANIE HECKER, Supervisor, Auxiliary Services

Classroom teachers in nonpublic schools and in Nazareth Area School District who teach Title I students have a common need for professional development. Title I regulations mandate the opportunity for these teachers to learn best practices that will help them to meet the needs of these struggling students. In response, Janie Hecker, Supervisor of Auxiliary Services and Michael Roth, Assistant Superintendent at Nazareth, joined efforts to offer the Institute for Growing Learners: Focus on Literacy. The Institute will be held at Nazareth Intermediate School on Tatamy Road on Saturday, April 16, 2011.

The keynote speaker will be Joan Sedita, founding member of Keys to Literacy in Massachusetts. She will set the tone for the day by reinforcing the importance of a high quality classroom teacher for every child. In the afternoon, Joan will facilitate a session on teaching comprehension. In addition, attendees may select one of three breakout sessions. Debra Matz, reading specialist at Nazareth will facilitate a session on readers' workshop. Donna Lloyd will facilitate a session on vocabulary and Andra Bell will facilitate a session on phonemic awareness and phonics. Donna and Andra are members of the IU 20 Training and consulting staff.

Attendees will earn Act 48 hours and leave the Institute with Joan Sedita's book **The Key Comprehension Routine**. The Institute will end with a drawing for additional professional materials. Contact Janie Hecker at (610) 515-6470 or jhecker@ciu20.org for additional information.



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For information regarding this statement, or special accommodations, please contact Mr. Anthony Pidgeon, Director of Human Resources and Research Services, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, 6 Danforth Drive, Easton, PA 18045-7899, (610) 252-5550, TDD/TTY Hearing Impaired (610) 252-3786.