

# Transitions News!

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## Getting to Know Transitions Programs...

“Part IV, Welcome New Additions”

### Work Services

**A**s of May 24<sup>th</sup>, Work Services has become a part of Transitions-North, on Remy Drive. This change is exciting because new opportunities will emerge because of it. The workshop program is part of the Person Centered Plan for over 110 consumers at Transitions-North and is valuable training that may lead to Supported Employment in the community. The paycheck resulting from the production work completed is very important to many consumers.

Work Services deals directly with production in the Workshop, as well as being responsible for the procurement of new jobs, maintaining current jobs, maintaining compliance with Wage and Hour regulations, doing wage and time studies, dealing with product delivery, quality control and customer service issues. They are also responsible for the operation of the Toothbrush Business, where over 900,000 toothbrushes were imprinted and sold last year alone. This business has been the mainstay for workshop consumers for over 20 years.

Steve Frese, Production and Marketing Specialist, procures work for the consumers in the workshop. He follows work leads, bids on jobs and maintains relationships with customers. He also assists with setting up work and equipping the consumers once a job is started. He recently brought in a new job for the Neogen

company related to testing moisture levels in field corn. Finding appropriate and steady work for the consumers is challenging so Steve is always interested in job leads. If you have any ideas or leads please contact him at 323-9558, ext. 156, or his cell phone number 930-4197.

Sharon Dane and Dave Weitzel came to Remy Drive in 2002, when the toothbrush operation was moved from the now closed Bretton Square Industries building. They process orders, bristle toothbrushes, imprint custom handles and ship finished goods. Sharon handles other aspects of the workshop jobs and is very knowledgeable about consumer work issues. Dave does some minor building maintenance in addition to production. If you would like more information related to Toothbrush imprinting, Sharon can be reached at 323-9558, ext. 137.

Change brings about new opportunities. Transitions North offers a complete package to increase consumer job readiness and production skills through meaningful work experiences. Questions are always welcome at 323-9558. (Susan Speers, ext. 116).



## Vocational Services

The CSDD Vocational Services Unit merged into

Transitions in April of 2004. The unit has been providing supported employment services for people with developmental disabilities since 1978. There are now approximately 200 people working in the community as a result of receiving these services and approximately 40% of all consumers served are now working in the community through supported employment.

Supported employment differs from regular job placement in that consumers are asked what type of job they would like, job developers meet with employers to find a good match, and then long term support and follow along is provided to the consumer, to better insure they retain their job. When job coaching is necessary, it is provided. In, 1998, the Vocational Services Unit received the Myrtle Yoshinaga Award for Clinical Excellence, in recognition for outstanding contributions to quality consumer care and community-agency development.

The three Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors of the unit are actively involved in the community. They are, Terri Henton, Vivian Turner, and John Root, the unit Senior. Each is a vital member of the Supportive Employment Clinical Team (SECT). The SECT is a collaborative partnership, involving CSDD Vocational Services, Michigan Commission for the Blind, Michigan Department of Career Development (formerly MRS), and Peckham Industries. Their ongoing, primary focus is job placement and retention. They also meet monthly as the Community Employment Team (CET) to focus their efforts on supported employment for consumers currently enrolled in Transitions programs.

The challenge for Vocational Services and Transitions is daunting, given the tenuous nature of our economy. Transitions efforts are currently being expended, and expanded, in the areas of community supported employment, community work enclave development, and increased consumer involvement in micro-enterprises. Transitions Vocational Services will continue to methodically meet the ever-increasing challenges of providing vocational rehabilitation services for consumers to prepare for, obtain, and/or maintain employment in the community.

In addition to the three Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors of the unit, Tom Wright is employed as the Community Supports Technician/Job Coach. Tom provides the direct supports to consumers to insure success in their employment. Feel free to contact any member of this unit if you have ideas for potential community employment!

### SPOTLIGHT:

*Terri Henton has been an active member of the Greater Lansing Chamber of Commerce for the past 10 years. Her efforts have enhanced understanding and expanded networking opportunities within the community. These efforts have directly translated into many supported employment opportunities. She has developed a very successful partnership with the Closing the Digital Gap Computer Vocational Program, associated with the Black Child-Family Institute. This creative partnership has resulted in consumers receiving training in the areas of computer technology, clerical support, tutoring, and food service. We applaud Terri's efforts!*

### PROGRAM CLOSINGS:

Monday, July 5, 2004.....Independence Day

Friday, August 6, 2004.....In Service Day

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The mission of CSDD is to promote and support ongoing choices for people and their families to be full and equal citizens in the community.

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