

VOICES

Consumer Stories

All I Ever Learned from a CMH Therapist (Written by an Anonymous member of Writers' Group)

1. Nothing is either black or white in thinking, there are shades of grey.
2. When you make a promise – keep it.
3. It is good to say “no”.
4. You must learn how to use a phone book.
5. Some issues are just T.M.I. (too much information).
6. Our actions have consequences.
7. Always keep appointments.
8. Learn to express your anger in a good way.
9. Do not blame others for your actions.
10. It is good to express feelings.
11. Learn to be assertive.
12. Everyone is interesting.
13. It's good to meet new friends and be friendly.
14. Make eye contact.
15. Use your therapy time wisely.

Need Help?



Do you have any questions or need help accessing any part of this newsletter? Contact Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or customerservice@ceicmh.org

Writing Submissions



We are still taking submissions for our Writer Spotlight! Do you have a story that you think could be shared in a future issue of this newsletter?

Make submissions to Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or customerservice@ceicmh.org



Mental Health (Written by Monique R.)

M – Make each day count
 E – Excited about life
 N – No negative
 T – Talk to Others
 A – Having a good Attitude
 L – Lots of fun & write letters

H – Having Happiness
 E – Encouraging Others
 A – Always work on yourself
 L – Lots of Change
 T – Being true to yourself
 H – being in the here and now

Vocational Services Shares Success Stories: Meet Bobbie.

"Someone or an organization who is looking to hire someone with disabilities, just know that they are going to be your hardest worker. They are going to come to work every day excited. Bobbie takes a lot of pride in her work. Just to hear someone say that they are proud of the work that they are doing makes it all worth it", states Cody Reavis, Planet Fitness Club Manager.

Cody continues to describe his staff experience working with Bobbie and the Vocational Services team at Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI). "It has been excellent", exclaimed Cody. "It has been a rewarding experience to be a part of Bobbie's support group and being able to see what goes on behind the scenes.

Working alongside the Vocational Services team and Bobbie's Job Coach to provide the best support for Bobbie has been rewarding and an educational experience for me and the staff at Planet Fitness. Bobbie always brings a positive attitude to work, which positively impacts our staff and members when they walk in through those doors".

Cody has previous experience working with the Vocational Services team at another Planet Fitness. After meeting Bobbie for an in-person interview, Cody was impressed and immediately hired her on the spot. Today, Cody is helping Bobbie thrive and grow by offering support when needed.

"I like to work at Planet Fitness because I like the people that work here and I get to meet new friends", explained Bobbie. When asked about her experience with Vocational Services, Bobbie exclaimed, "It was good! The Job Coach has shown me how to do my job and if I have missed anything. I feel supported because Cody told me that whenever I need help, Cody said that I could come to him for help".

Bobbie is just one of the 20 individuals with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (IDD) that have successfully gained meaningful employment over the course of six months with assistance from the Vocational Services team at CMHA-CEI. The Vocational Services team provide individuals with IDD with voluntary support to help equip them with the skills and resources to be independent and thrive in their chosen place of employment.

"Bobbie has been in our Work Services Program for a few months now. We worked on everything that would go into the normal job process", states Alexis North, Vocational Counselor at CMHA-CEI. "We worked on building her resume, we practiced completing online and paper applications so she could learn the process of what that would look like, we conducted mock interviews to practice interview style questions, and I also attended a couple different interviews and assisted her with any additional support that she may have needed. We really aim for individuals to use their own voice and advocate for themselves during an interview, but we are willing to attend interviews just to give them more support during the process". Once an individual independently gains employment, it is up to the individual if they would still like to continue working with the Vocational Services team.



“We all just work as a collective team to help her be successful and to help support the employer”.

“It’s really cool to see how Bobbie has evolved throughout the whole process. Today, we continue to work with her to maintain her progress and I continue to assist her in other ways while she is working at Planet Fitness. “We all just work as a collective team to help her be successful and to help support the employer”.

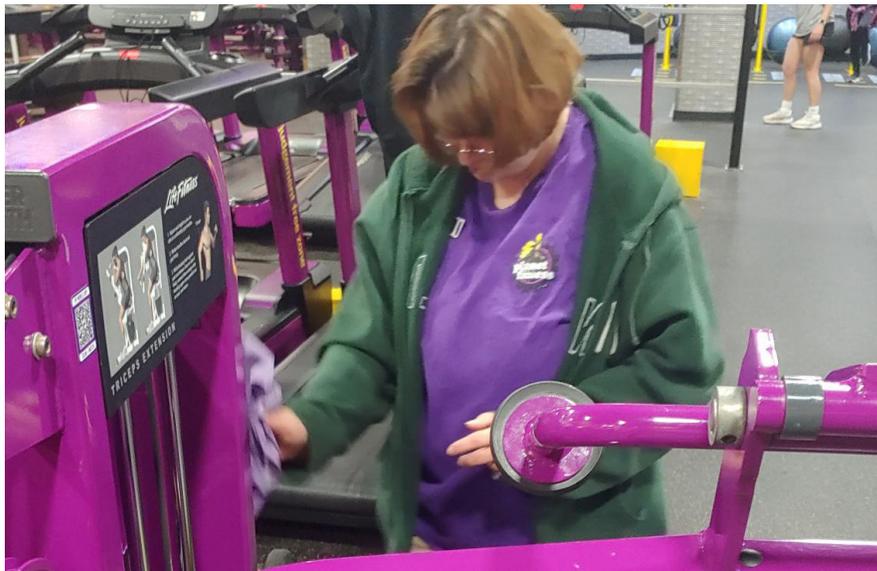
One of Alexis’s goals is to really work with employers to end the stigma around hiring individuals with disabilities. “We really strive for employers to understand that individuals with IDD can thrive in any areas of employment that they put their minds to and erase the negative stigma. Individuals with disabilities are

just like everyone else who can not only do the job, but be a positive asset to their team”. Many individuals with IDD may have had a negative experience and/or have the fear of being rejected from employment because of their disability. Alexis and her team are there to ensure the individual that, not only can they gain employment, but that they can gain employment in an area that they are passionate about and could see themselves doing.

Bruce Vankersen, Bobbie’s Job Coach, works with the employer to offer additional support when circumstances arise during a shift. This support may look like verbal prompts and reminders of job responsibilities and duties while an individual is still learning their job. Alexis and her team offer supports on the clinical side, where she works directly with Bobbie and her goals. Alexis also works directly with the employer if there are circumstances that arise, and the employer and the Job Coach need additional support. Alexis will work with the guardian, homes, case managers, and any additional members of the individual’s clinical and support team.

In example in Bobbie’s case, Alexis and Bruce worked together to create a visual that would assist her in completing her job duties more effectively. “We worked together to create a map of all of the different workout machines at Planet Fitness. This map really helped Bobbie because she was cleaning so many machines, but she would forget which machines she had just cleaned. The map offered her a visual aid to physically cross off each machine that she had cleaned, which helped her stay on track”. This was also satisfying for her to visually see just how much work she had accomplished during her shift. Bobbie is constantly learning new skills that helps her better track her time and communication to other staff to see if there are any additional work that needs to be done before she leaves at the end of her shift.

Alexis stresses that this is a voluntary program that individuals can join to assist them in gaining community based, competitive, an integrated employment. However, if they do not want employment then they do not have to be in Vocational Services. Instead, they can find programs or things in the community where they can volunteer, join a club, or a league interesting to them and then come back to the Vocational Services when they want employment.



“Vocational Services works with the employer to work as a collective team to support each other”.

The program is also built to serve the employer's needs as well as the individual's needs. In Cody's experience, hiring someone with disabilities has helped his staff better their communication skills, “It has positively affected our hiring process and our work environment because Bobbie brings a positive energy. You can always count on Bobbie to greet someone with kindness and make everyone feel welcome, and that is very important to our members here”.

Having someone employed with disabilities also benefits the diversity of the organization. Alexis states that this partnership gives an individual with IDD resources and skills to be successful at their place in employment, but also benefits the employer by being able to retain hard working employees that offer positive energy to the environment and those around them. Vocational Services works with the employer to work as a collective team to support each other.

“It's such a rewarding experience to have an employer who truly accepts them for who they are and accepts their awesome skills that they bring to the table. With Bobbie, I have seen her confidence increase over time because she truly feels comfortable and accepted by Cody and his team. Seeing Bobby accomplish her job duties, but also being respected and being treated as every other employee can be life changing for the employee because that may not have always been the case in previous employment or experiences. We really want to ensure that everyone is safe and comfortable in their job. Even the employer, that they understand how to work with the employee, or assigning job tasks that may be difficult for the employee and to work with them. Making a difference and a positive impact in someone's life makes it worth it”.

Employers can reach out to the Vocational Services Program by contacting Scott Belanger at belanger@ceicmh.org or Alexis North at northal@ceicmh.org.

Those interested in joining workforce training under Vocational Services may contact our Access Center at 517-346-8318 or email at access@ceicmh.org.



Vocational Services: Carl Breese – Interview

1. What has been your experience working with Vocational Services staff?

-“I think she's very bright, careful, and experienced and gets lots of feedback.”

-“Cause its positive, cause I like it”

2. Do you feel like CMHA-CEI vocational services were supportive and how did they support you?

-“Supportive, a lot, cause it's a big responsibility, on my part to look at the job and make sure I like it.”

-“We looked at the choices (positions); we print out resumes to certain job sites; filled out applications and read the job information”

3. What would you change/adjust about the Vocational services program?

-“I've enjoyed my time, seeing people you know say hi and say I haven't seen you in a long time”

-“No, just try to support them and stuff, otherwise they are going to say 'oh I don't know how to do this' “You have a lot of training and a lot of efforts to my part and everybody else is trying to fix the things they want to fix, that's where you (CMHA-CEI) come in.”

4. What interested you in applying to MSU Events Worker position?

-“I am a social guy!”

-“Alotta of training and alotta of effort goes with that” from previous experience.

-“I would say I like the job and everyone supported me”

-“Well, I get to see lots of games!”

5. What have you liked most about your job so far?

-“I love it because I got to deal with the you know people and stuff”

-“I love it, seeing the crowd, the energy from the crowd.”

6. How have your relationships grown with your boss or co-workers?

-“I like them, they are nice.”

-“Anything I do they notice and say 'Carl can you do this, can you set the chairs up and I dust them off'”

7. Would you recommend the Vocational Services program to fellow peers?

-“Yes! I recommend them to realize they can get a job at any place!”

-“Well, it takes time and consider being patience, and don't give up. It takes time to find a job! But it's worth it!”

MSU Experience: “My experience I have a lot of fun. The students, you know, they let me give them high fives and we have fun about it!” “I like the chaotic experience.”



SAVE THE DATE! VIRTUAL ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENT

Join us Virtually on Tuesday, March 29th, 2022 from
8:30AM - 11:30AM.

Register by clicking the link Below:

<https://bit.ly/AnnualEvent2022>

The event will be recorded
and will air on Sunday, May 15th,
2022 from 11:00AM to 12:00PM on
WILX.



The graphic features a dark blue background with a green diagonal stripe. On the left, the text 'Save the Date' is written in large, bold, green letters. Below it, the date and time 'March 29, 2022 8:30am-11:30am' are displayed in white. At the bottom, the text 'Join us Virtually for the Annual Community Event' is written in white. On the right side, there is an image of a laptop displaying the 'Community Mental Health' logo and the tagline 'Together we can.' The logo consists of three interlocking circles in green, yellow, and blue.



Dr. BRENDA JONES HARDEN is the Alison Richman Professor for Children and Families, at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She directs the Prevention and Early Adversity Research Laboratory, where she and her research team examine the developmental and mental health needs of young children who have experienced early adversity and toxic stress, particularly those who have been maltreated, are in foster care, or have experienced other forms of trauma.

A particular focus is preventing maladaptive outcomes in these populations through early childhood programs. She has conducted numerous evaluations of such programs, including early care and education, home visiting services, parenting interventions, and infant mental health programs. Dr. Jones Harden is a scientist-practitioner who uses research to improve the quality and effectiveness of child and family services and to inform child and family policy, especially in the area of child welfare. She is currently the Vice President of the Board at Zero to Three, and serves on various federal, state, and local advisory boards. She received a PhD in developmental and clinical psychology from Yale University and a Master's in Social Work from New York University.