



INTO THE WORLD OF WORK

News for Families and Supporters

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Number 38

So far this year, we have secured over 40 new jobs!

Spring 2014

CAREERS Meets the Needs of Young Adults

When you think of CAREERS, you probably think of the hundreds of adults we place and support in jobs each year. However, a growing segment of our clients are high school students looking to ease the transition from high school to the world of employment. CAREERS has responded to this need with a number of new programs to help bridge the gap from graduation to the workplace (see "Ambition In Motion" article on page 2).

Many school districts are being stretched beyond their resources to provide the mandated services required by New York State to ensure that all students meet the new graduation requirements. In response to the new Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) curriculum, CAREERS is currently collaborating with school districts throughout Westchester and Putnam Counties to provide the following services:

For Students:

- Career exploration, work readiness & financial skills training through a weekly classroom curriculum
- Community internships
- Assistance with applications to New York State ACCES-VR
- Job development, placement, on-the-job training and follow-along services
- Advocacy, referral and resources for a successful transition from school to work

For School Districts:

- Job Coach training seminars for school personnel
- Job development, placement & worksite support for students and Teacher's Assts.
- Attendance and participation at CSE meetings
- Unique and motivating classroom activities in career exploration, job development skills, mock interviews, resume and cover letter preparation

CAREERS offers services to students through private contracts with their home district. We provide professional support to district staff and equip students with the skills needed to secure the right job. Our experience in job placement and training provides exceptional insights to help students develop the skills necessary for a lifetime of successful employment.

We have had great success with our **Project Search** program with New Rochelle High School and are currently negotiating with other school districts to provide this intensive job placement and training service. Within the Project Search program, CAREERS staff collaborates with the district to teach students at job sites; analyzing their strengths, training them based on their interests and providing shadowing services to them while they learn workforce readiness skills in varied internships.



New Rochelle HS senior Lisa enjoys working in the kitchen as well as in the recreation center at the United Hebrew Geriatric Center.

For more information about CAREERS transition services and how we may assist you, contact one of our Transition Coordinators:

Putnam & Upper Westchester: Marie O'Connor, (845) 225-8007, X 104

E-mail: CAREERSOutreach@aol.com

Mid to Lower Westchester: Jennifer Retacco, (914) 741-8500, X 108

E-mail: CAREERSSprvsr@aol.com



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with Disabilities, Inc.

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CAREERS is a private non-profit organization that finds productive employment for individuals with disabilities by providing placement, on-the-job training and ongoing support services.

AIM - AMBITION IN MOTION A DAY HABILITATION PROGRAM WITHOUT WALLS

If you've seen a Ford Flex filled with recyclables cruising around Putnam County, it's probably CAREERS' AIM team, working on one of the community projects that the group has taken on since its inception in September. Participants in our day habilitation program without walls are learning the life skills they need while enjoying volunteer and recreational activities.

The program was created to provide a stepping stone for individuals to move from a traditional day habilitation setting to a person-centered approach where they learn to interact with their environment. Participants are taught workforce readiness skills and encouraged to take an active role in the world around them. It is tailored to the abilities of each participant and creates opportunities for individuals with disabilities, who do not have the skills to participate in a supported employment program, to interact and contribute to the local community at whatever level they can. This unique concept provides a sense of independence and self-reliance through diverse experiences.

We bridge the gap from school to life as an adult by teaching skills needed for independent day-to-day activities while preparing participants to be more job-ready.

Participants are regulars in area food stores and recreation centers. They have learned how to navigate laundromats and libraries and have favorite shelter animals and deli specials. Then there's the garden plot in the Tilly Foster Garden that our AIM group can't wait to dig into!

Whether it is shredding or mailing documents, cooking lunch or cleaning the office, AIM participants have a full day of worthwhile activities, with the added benefit of socialization with new friends and the community in which they live.

Understanding that there are many needs to be addressed for this population, transportation is provided to AIM participants in Westchester and Putnam Counties. If you have questions, or know someone who would benefit from joining our group, please call Rebecca Appleyard at (845) 225-8007 x101.



Doug and Greg (top photo) spend their days doing activities that include office cleaning and document shredding, although a stop at the Guitar Center in Danbury is a favorite activity for Doug. The AIM vehicle is often filled with recyclables, plant material, groceries, laundry and/or sports equipment!

Corporate and Foundation Support Keeps CAREERS Thriving

CAREERS has new friends and old to thank for their continued support in 2014.....

Long time supporter Hitachi Metals America, LTD has again chosen CAREERS as a grant beneficiary for 2014. "We are touched by your organization's commitment to finding employment for individuals with disabilities, as well as your training, support services and community education efforts," said Laura Alexander, Hitachi Metals America, LTD, Community Action Committee Chair for the Purchase, NY Chapter. "Thank you again for your commitment to providing individuals with disabilities the opportunity to become self-sufficient."

"Special thanks to Hitachi Metals, who have been a supporter of CAREERS since 2009," said Tina Cornish-Lauria, CAREERS' Executive Director. "This grant represents an endorsement of our Supported Work programs and the success we are able to achieve with our unique one-on-one relationship with each client and employer."



People's United Bank Senior Market Manager Stephen Shealy, (right) and Customer Service Manager Paula Saraiva, (second from right), visited our Valhalla office recently to learn more about our program. They presented a check from the People's United Community Foundation to CAREERS' Program and Transition Coordinator Jen Retacco and CAREERS' client Peter Marshall.

"This donation from The People's United Community Foundation will support our Workforce Readiness, Placement and Training Program," according to Tina. "The Foundation supports many organizations in the community and we are thrilled to be included in their philanthropic mission."

The Dyson Foundation has awarded a 2-year grant to support our programs in Putnam County. "The Dyson Foundation has also provided funding for our programs since 2009 and we appreciate their on-going support and interest in the well-being of our clients," Tina said. "The Dyson Foundation is happy to support CAREERS' work in Putnam County. Over the past 5 years, the Foundation has granted \$70,000 to support job-readiness services to Putnam residents," said Cecilia Stancell, Program Officer for the Dyson Foundation.

H.O.P.E. For Youth Foundation President Jim Witt presented CAREERS' High School Transition Coordinator Marie O'Connor with a donation in support of our School-to-Work Transition program at the Rotary Club of Peekskill luncheon in February (see photo right).

"Since 2005, Jim Witt and The H.O.P.E. For Youth Foundation have provided funding for CAREERS and the students who benefit from our programs", Tina said. "We match and train high school students with jobs in their community, then follow-up with support from CAREERS staff. Special thanks to The H.O.P.E. For Youth Foundation for allowing us to help students achieve independence through employment!"



Special thanks to our 2013 corporate and foundation supporters:

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The Standard
TransAmerica
United Way of Westchester and Putnam
Wells Fargo

CAREERS' GOOD NEWS NETWORK

Julie

Moving to New York from Florida was not easy for Julie (far right), who loved her hospitality job at Disney World. She was hoping for a similar job, which is hard to come by in Westchester County.

Julie participated in National Disability Mentoring Day in fall of 2013, coordinated by CAREERS in Westchester and Putnam Counties. Because of her background, we placed her at the Westchester County Department of Parks and Recreation. She did so well, her mentor suggested she apply for a job at the Westchester County Center as a Recreation Attendant. Julie was thrilled at the opportunity but concerned because there were many people applying for the same opening.

During our Workforce Readiness Job Club, we practiced mock interviews, where peer support and encouragement built up her confidence in preparation for the interview. Julie did so well she was offered the job on the spot! She began working in December at Westchester County Center special events, including some that are Disney related! She feels she has found her dream job, and the staff at the County Center is thrilled with her enthusiasm!



Robert and Robin

Robert and Robin, longtime CAREERS clients who work at different Stop and Shop locations in Westchester, were honored at the National Disability Employee Awareness Month Awards Breakfast in October for their dedicated service to their employers. They were also the guests of the United Way at their annual Board retreat and at the 2014 United Way Leadership Dinner, where they shared how their participation with CAREERS and the United Way's "Teach Me to Fish....Work Skills for Life" Initiative has enhanced their lives. A video the United Way produced for a recent fundraiser also featured the couple, who recently celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary!

We couldn't be more proud of the progress they have made and success they have achieved with the support of CAREERS and their Employment Specialist, Allison Scorca, (pictured left at the NDEAM Awards breakfast).

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

CAREERS' Board President Marianne Brown (pictured right), who was recently named Chief Operating Officer of SunGard Financial Systems. Russ Fradin, SunGard's President and CEO, said Marianne adds "tremendous value in helping us drive the growth and performance of our financial systems business." Prior to her recent move, Marianne was President and CEO of Omgeo for seven years. In addition to being a valiant supporter of CAREERS, Marianne has also been an advocate for the advancement of women on Wall Street throughout her career.



Tina Cornish-Lauria celebrates her 25th Anniversary at CAREERS this year. She joined CAREERS in 1989 to open the agency's northern Westchester branch and was appointed Executive Director in 1991. Under her guidance, the agency has grown to be one of the most successful in the area, with over 2,200 individuals placed in jobs and thousands more receiving training and follow-along services.