

# 2011 Staff Reporter

January • February March • April May ★ June July • August September • October November • December

## What Really Matters—A Job Well Done

### A Message from Candy, COO

Thank you for achieving excellence in supporting each person in working toward the things that matter to them and in making meaningful changes to our planning process!

**Scores for the first quarter were 93.8% and 100% in these key quality areas!**

To obtain great results, dedication, commitment, and action by all team members is essential. The results of our leadership goals for our customer are exemplary. It could not have been possible to achieve without each member of the team making sure that “What Matters to Me” truly happened for each and every individual! Your success stories, enthusiasm and attention to detail are crystal clear.

The completion of the evaluation tool at the conclusion of each annual meeting helps us to see that people are celebrating success in ways they choose. We have seen countless examples of the meaning these changes have had for the people we support.

#### ***I would like to recognize:***

- Andy Stegeland for his leadership role in completing the personal outcome interviews for over 220 individuals! Andy’s belief in person-focused supports is evident in all he does!

- Our Medicaid Service Coordinators for their responsiveness in completing outcome interviews, changing our planning process and ensuring all meetings are a personally designed celebration of success!
- Our teams in Day programs for ensuring creation of the personalized, visual cover page for the ISP and writing Habilitation plans that “Matter to Me!”
- Our Residential team for writing excellent Habilitation plans and for making certain that people are doing things that are important to them and for all the creative planning of their celebrations.
- Our Clinical and Medical teams for being so enthusiastic in the pre-meeting emails and for contributing to each person’s plan in such a meaningful manner.
- Our QA and IT team members for their technical assistance that laid the foundation for this success.



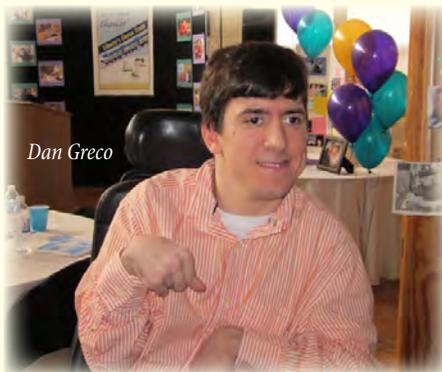
Candy Opalka, COO

The impact of each person working toward things that truly matter to them is monumental. You have truly made a difference! Thanks for your dedication to making these goals our reality, at 93.8% and 100%! ■

### A Letter from Dan Greco

Dan Greco and members of his Alzheimer’s Team, “Remembrance of Family and Friends,” would like to thank everyone that helped us in our fundraising efforts! With your help, Dan was able to hold a bake sale, yard sale, a bowling event and sold calendars which in total, raised over \$2,000! Thank You to all who made this possible – we could not have done this without you! ■

Thank you,  
Dan Greco and his Alzheimer’s Team



Dan Greco

## CALENDAR

### ◆◆◆◆◆ August

**10 Up-county Staff BBQ**  
3 to 5 PM • Wiles Park, Fort Plain

### ◆◆◆◆◆ October

**27 Feather Your Nest 2011 Raffle Drawing**  
Get Your Tickets Today! Contact Lisa Augustine, ext. 3203 for more information.

*Don't Forget! Liberty's 2nd Annual Farmers' Market is being held every Friday through October 21 outside of the Day Supports Building. Be sure to stop by between 9 AM and Noon.*

Liberty's Favorite Family Recipes Cookbooks are now on sale in the HR office at \$5 each. All proceeds will benefit the Amsterdam Homeless Shelter. Buy yours today!



## Recognition: Direct Support Professional



Georgeann Brammer

The following is an excerpt from the recognition submitted to SANYS (Self Advocacy Association of New York State) by Liberty's Self Advocates:

### Liberty Self Advocates Recognize Direct Support Professional Georgeann Brammer

**G**eorgeann Brammer is a wonderful staff who supports us a lot. She supports us by assisting a group of us to go to FM and take college courses. She is always been there for us when we need a person to talk to when we are having a problem. We really like hanging out with her as she enjoys some of the same music and activities we like and we all have a good time. We have two individuals in our program that she does a great job providing hands-on care

to daily and the two really appreciate her work as we all do.

Georgeann is a very caring person we all like to be with. All the consumers in our program love being in groups with her as the staff. She really enjoys the line dancing, art, and shopping groups. Georgeann is willing to do things that may not be as much fun like assisting others to clean up our parks, but she always does this with a smile. Georgeann is always happy and upbeat and willing to work no matter what the job is or how she is feeling. Georgeann has a wonderful sense of humor and silliness putting smiles on our faces daily. Georgeann is an avid coffee drinker and loves taking her groups to the local Stewart's for coffee breaks. Georgeann not only provides good services to us, she also volunteers her time at a local fire department. ■

## Tracy Mead

### Leader of the Quarter

Tracy Mead began working as a Clerk with Liberty twenty years ago. Over the years, her hard work and dedication helped her achieve the position she holds today—Accounts Receivable Supervisor.

In this role, Tracy is responsible for oversight of Liberty's very important Medicaid billing process, ensuring that the information is submitted accurately and on a timely basis and that the expected revenue is received.

Tracy leads by example and is a supportive and helpful member of her team. She is most known for her willingness to help others, answer questions and address concerns, while keeping a positive attitude and a smile on her face! Tracy said, "There are so many outstanding leaders at Liberty I was honored and humbled to be chosen as the first Leader of the Quarter. One of the things I enjoy most about my job are the people I work with every day and I am proud to be a small part of a great team."

Congratulations, Tracy! ♦



2nd Quarter • 2011

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MAY 2011

Employee of the Month

## Sue Ferry



Sue Ferry began working for Liberty's Residential Program as a Direct Support Professional in July of 1995. She started her training at Old Trail and through the years expanded her experience in a variety of residential sites. The Ridge Road family was fortunate to welcome Sue as a full-time staff member in 1998.

Thirteen years later, Sue is still working at Ridge Road with her original enthusiasm and dedication to her job. Sue has played a pivotal role in many of Liberty's initiatives. She is a member of the Assessment Team and the Dementia Alzheimer's Resource Committee (DARC) and she has also worked on the Quality Design Team. Sue is always eager to learn and share her knowledge with the individuals we support and her co-workers. She gives 100% to her job, and is always willing to help out wherever needed. Sue is a shining example of Liberty's Commitments to Each Other, and holds true to all of our values – Quality, Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Resourcefulness, and Person-Centered. Congratulations, Sue! ♦



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JUNE 2011

Employee of the Month

## Gaudy Soriano



Gaudy Soriano has been with Liberty since 2006. She works in T&H for Day Supports as well as contributing valuable time to the FSS program. Gaudy is always willing to work days, nights, and as needed to provide

exceptional service to the people she supports. She participates in fundraising activities in T&H and is known to make the "world's best" *empanadas*.

Gaudy is also a primary means of communication for some of our Spanish speaking individuals. Her value to the agency is emphasized by the fact she was nominated for Employee of the Month by colleagues in both the Day and FSS programs.

Congratulations, Gaudy! ♦



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## Beyond Multi-Tasking

By Heather Vecchio and Jesse Markes

Communication technology in today's world is reaching extreme proportions at every level of society. This "engagement" may include: talking, texting, surfing the web, looking at pictures, watching movies, shopping, sending pictures, conducting business and many other activities requiring the undivided attention of the user. Multi-tasking is a proficiency almost required now for daily life. People are becoming more accustomed to their multi-tasking lifestyles, despite the risks.

Possibly the greatest risk from these type of technologies is cell phone distraction causing vehicle accidents. On July 5, the NYS Legislature passed a more aggressive bill on distracted driving, which allows law enforcement to ticket

distracted drivers as a primary offense. This bill passed by the legislature will certainly improve the current status for enforcement and move the state towards reducing the number of crashes each year.



**What can we do at Liberty to reduce risk to ourselves and those we support? Here are a few positive steps towards improving safety:**

- Recognize agency policy which prohibits the use of cell phones while driving and be a model for safety leadership at work. We must demonstrate the behaviors expected, so put down the phone and remind co-workers to do the same.
  - Find safe locations on your work routes which are good places to make calls when necessary. Pull over and save a life!
  - Drivers who are speeding and attempting to use their cell phones are particularly at risk, so watch your speed and drive safely!
  - Educate yourself and others to these facts:
    - Reaction time for drivers talking on cell phones is delayed as much as it is for a driver who is legally drunk.
  - Drivers who are texting take their eyes off the road 400% more than when they are not texting.
    - More texting leads to more crashes. With each additional text message, fatalities from distracted driving rose more than 75%.
- Safety is the cornerstone of every job. Build on it! ■



Heather Vecchio  
Safety Manager



Jesse Markes  
Committee Chair

Liberty will be launching a new product line with over 30 new products including GOJO® Hand Hygiene products and PURELL® Hand Sanitizers. GOJO Industries and Liberty Enterprises have entered into a Co-Brand Agreement exclusive to the State of New York. The product line will be launched August 1 and available through the New York State Industries for the Disabled (NYSID).



This new line of products will create Jobs and Daily work opportunities in the manufacturing division of Liberty. Through this initiative, Liberty will be able to create additional revenue to support our agency's mission and service programs.

GOJO Industries, Inc. is the leading global producer and marketer of skin health and hygiene solutions for away-from-home settings. Liberty's agreement includes hand cleaning, hand washing, hand sanitizing, and skin care formulas under the GOJO® and PURELL® brand names. Liberty's product line will serve a variety of markets with comprehensive skin health and hygiene solutions. For a complete list, please visit our website at [www.libertycleanproducts.com](http://www.libertycleanproducts.com). ■

## Personnel Personals



### • Births •

A son, Jaiden Carlos Feliciano born 3/27/11 to Diana Gonzalez (Day Support) and Carlos Feliciano

### • Birthday •

Michele Ilnicki (RN) Benchmark Birthday on May 30, 2011

### • Other •

Lance Corporal Christopher Ilnicki Son of Michele (RN) and Ed Ilnicki Currently serving in Afghanistan with the USMC



### • Marriages •

Sharon Oleksak's (Residential) daughter, to Mike Woods on June 5, 2011

### Regina DeSarle (HR)

to Wes TenEyck on July 1, 2011

# Benefits Corner

## Healthy Lifestyles Program

The following employees have qualified for the \$240 HRA credit, effective 7/1/11, for completing **Liberty's Healthy Lifestyles Program!**

Lisa Augustine	Marieke Freeman	Renee Martin
Deborah Barker	Jo Ann Fuller	Tracy Mead
Jennifer Bernardo	Christin Gawrelski	Shannon Mills
Susan Bilili	Terri Hallenbeck	Robin Moller
Lorie Bowerman	Daniel Harrison	Susan Niles
Linda Brinkerhoff	Robert Hayes	Candace Opalka
Dawn Buck	Kimberly Hills	Cathy Pessolano
Jacqueline Carpenter	Tammy Honeywell	Cindy Reid
Nilda Colon	Lisa Kinowski	Janis Rorick
Joann Conway	Sheree Kretser	Lorraine Scafidi
Janet Czeski	Bonnie Kruger	Suzanna Schulz
Kathy Delos	Michael LaCoppola	Janice Sheckton
Theresa DeSorbo	Cynthia Lannen	Sarah Snell
Meeann Dingman	Louella Larin	Karen Sylvia
Dana Dorlon	Melissa Lasher	Christine Tessiero
Michael Downey	Peter Lawrence	Anna Wozniak
Darlene Elmwood	Tara Lombardi	Cynthia Yacobucci
Karen Fredericks	April Marcellino	Lisa Zanella

For those who haven't earned the \$240 yet, keep working. There are still two more chances to earn the funds before the end of the year. For more information on what you must complete to earn this credit contact the HR Department.

## Additional Educational Opportunities

Liberty is excited to announce additional educational opportunities with our partners at Fulton-Montgomery Community College for the upcoming fall semester. Our goal is to work together to assist our staff in learning more about the people we support and to increase leadership opportunities at Liberty.

FM developed specialized classes starting in Spring, 2011. These classes have a Human Services focus, specializing in areas of psychology and disability awareness.

This is an opportunity for staff to begin or continue college education from the comfort of their homes! As you may know, Liberty will reimburse employees up to \$828 per semester through the Tuition Reimbursement Program. Any employee who is interested should speak with his or her manager regarding the process. Payment toward books associated with these classes is an additional incentive for staff working in our leadership track who have a Leadership Development Plan in place.

**Listed below are some of the classes available:**

Introduction to Human Services

Human Services Interventions

Gerontology

Any staff member interested in obtaining copies of the syllabi for these courses to gauge the workload, can do so by accessing FM's website at <https://fmcc.suny.edu>. Please contact Christie Crawford in FM's Advisement Center if you would like to register for this or any other course. She can be contacted by email at: [christie.crawford@fmcc.suny.edu](mailto:christie.crawford@fmcc.suny.edu) or by phone at 762-4651 ext. 4710. She works until 8 PM Monday-Thursday.

Good luck as you pursue this great opportunity and let us know how we can help you. ■

# Bon Voyage, Nilda

Nilda Colon joined Liberty in June, 2000, and over the years became a Medicaid Service Coordinator "extraordinaire." She has taken pride in assisting Latino individuals, finding supports and providers for all their needs. Nilda has been instrumental in assisting Liberty with translations and has advocated that various material be available in Spanish. She has had wonderful relationships with her co-workers and has always celebrated the accomplishments of others. Along with receiving the Employee of the Month for August, 2007, Nilda was honored with The Sister Maria N. Dolan award for Humanitarian Services from Catholic Charities. She has been actively involved as a volunteer in her community and her church. Nilda is a very special person and we have been extremely honored and thankful to have had her as part of the MSC family. Nilda is relocating to Puerto Rico, where her family anxiously awaits her arrival. ■



Nilda and Frank Capone, CEO, at her retirement party on June 27, 2011.

# Goodbye, Kim

On Friday, July 1, **Kim Lawrence** resigned from her position at Liberty to pursue a job with Arkell Hall's Assisted Living Facility in Canajoharie. This is an excellent opportunity for Kim. There is no doubt that she will bring excellence, pride and the highest of standards to this new role.

Kim began her career at Liberty in October, 1990, in the Day Support Program, working as a Habilitation Specialist II.

Over the years, she was promoted to more supervisory roles within Day Program. She moved to the residential program in 2000

where her skills and commitment to the individuals made her a pivotal resource in the development of the program during a time of positive change. We will miss Kim's common sense, intuitive approach to everyday issues, large and small. We thank her for 20+ years of dedicated service and wish her the very best in her new job at Arkell Hall! ■



Kim Lawrence

# Trash 'n' Treasures

■ **FOR SALE – 2005 red Ford F-250, 61,000 miles.** Price: \$15,000. Contact April in the Nursing Department by e-mail: [AprilM@libertyarc.org](mailto:AprilM@libertyarc.org) or by phone: 518-878-2361.

■ **FOR SALE – Slightly used 4 in 1 baby crib with changing table and 3 drawer dresser attached.** Price: \$150. Contact Rebecca in the Residential Department by e-mail: [Rebeccatownsend09@yahoo.com](mailto:Rebeccatownsend09@yahoo.com) or by phone: 518-844-7768.