

# SOWER

Division of Developmental Disabilities

March 2010

sowing seeds of closer communication among  
Nebraskans working to ensure dignity,  
choice and quality of life for persons with  
developmental disabilities

## From the Directors Desk. . .

It feels like just yesterday when I wrote my last column — time really does go by fast when you are having fun! Speaking of fun, this edition is our special quarterly edition. Quarterly issues may look like the *Sower* you used to receive, because they feature special interest stories that I am certain you will enjoy.

You will read about several individuals and how they are succeeding in more independent living and working environments, both at BSDC and in the community. You will hear about some additional supports and opportunities being provided through Division partnerships with providers and other agencies. You'll see additional information about upcoming opportunities for training. Best

of all, however, you will learn how you can contribute to improving opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities by participation in the creation of our new State Plan.

I want to thank those of you who have shared your positive comments about the newsletter and those of you who have participated in our Town Hall meetings. We are working really hard to improve communication and keep you informed. I owe a huge thanks to my assistant Tyla Vogt, Tricia Mason's assistant Kim McFarland and Dan Howell's assistant Yvonne Eckoff. The three of them working together diligently make many of the Division's activities possible.

I look forward to seeing many of you in the upcoming months, either through the Stakeholder meetings or at a Town Hall

meeting. The Stakeholder meetings are described on page three, and are your opportunity to contribute directly to our new State Plan. With the exceptions of March, Town Hall meetings will occur monthly. These are open meetings where the Division leaders provide updates on activities occurring in the State and answer questions from meeting attendees. These are very informal meetings, and we welcome you to come and share your thoughts and concerns. We will provide a list of dates for the 2010 Town Hall meetings in next month's newsletter.

Enjoy the enclosed articles, and I look forward to meeting many of you in March!

- Jodi M. Fenner

# Blazing a Trail is all the Rave

By: Laurie Ackermann  
Executive Director  
Ollie Webb Center, Inc.

“It’s kind’a like a piece of cake! I enjoy it!” That’s how Jason Hobbs described the job he found with the help from Career Solutions, Inc., an agency of the Ollie Webb Center, Inc. in Omaha, Nebraska. He continued, “We’re a team over there. Good people. Good team.”

Jason has been working for almost a year at “The Rave,” one of Omaha’s newest “multi-plex” movie theaters. At The Rave, Jason does a variety of things to help his beloved team. He cleans and sweeps the theaters, he takes tickets and he is thoroughly involved with “food prep,” which happens to be one of his strengths. His manager describes Jason as a “stellar employee” who is “outstanding” in the area of food prep, which he emphasized is the most important way The Rave brings in money. He said they take great pride in Jason’s thorough attention to this area and that he feels a strong sense of security knowing that Jason will accomplish these daily tasks suc-

cessfully and independently. We should also note that Jason has lasted through two separate periods of layoffs that his employer was forced to make during the last six months. They cite his incredible ability to charm customers as another personal strength that kept him on the team.

Jason’s personality is almost beyond words and one of his primary interests in life is Harley Davidson Motorcycles. He started with Career Solutions’ daily continuing education classes in 2004 and continues to attend; only not as often due to his schedule at The Rave. Despite any limitations Jason ex-

periences, he is as sharp and clever as anybody we’ve ever met! For example, when we contacted him for this article, we mentioned how much sense it made to us that during his food preparation duties he would be working with hot peppers and nachos every other day, considering his interest in hot Harley bikes and trail blazing. To that he said, “Well that’s me alright! Ha! That’s me blazin’ a trail of fire and good stuff through life and work with those fire nachos!”



Photo Left—Jason Hobbs— by Joyce Werner

Photo Above—Co-workers and Jason Hobbs at “The Rave” - by Joyce Werner

## Developmental Disabilities Summit

By: Kathie Lueke,  
Deputy Administrator for Quality Improvement

Hopefully you have had a chance to review the brochure for the Summit scheduled for March 25, 26, and 27<sup>th</sup>. If not, the full brochure is posted to the DHHS-Developmental Disabilities website page. The Summit schedule includes four tracks: DD/Provider Management, Direct Support, Family/Guardian, and Medical tracks.

The Medical track offers valuable continuing medical education units (CMEs) and nursing continuing education units (CEUs). **Please help us spread the word to local medical and nursing professionals who care for individuals with Developmental Disabilities in your area!**

**The Family/Guardian track** is offered more than once each day of the conference. Please join us for one of the following sessions: On Thursday, at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, “Alternatives to Guardianship” and “Special Needs Trusts and Directives” sessions are both offered from 3:30 – 5:00 PM, and repeated from 6:00 - 7:30 PM. On Friday, at the Ramada Inn – Kearney, the “Alternatives to Guardianship” session is offered from 3:30 – 5:00 PM, and repeated from 6:00 – 7:30 PM. On Saturday, again at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, the “Alternatives to Guardianship” session is offered from 8:30 – 10:00 AM, and repeated from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

# Stakeholder Meetings for State Plan and Waivers

The division's 3-year state plan and adult waiver amendments are due for renewal. Please join us at one of our public stakeholder meetings to share your thoughts on these topics. We value your input and interest as we strive to provide the best services possible for individuals with developmental disabilities. For any questions or video conference addresses see our web site [www.dhhs.ne.gov/Developmental\\_Disabilities/](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/Developmental_Disabilities/) or contact Kim at [kim.mcfarland@nebraska.gov](mailto:kim.mcfarland@nebraska.gov) or 402-471-8714.

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Location:</b>
March 8 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 pm—6:00	Platte Valley, 1212 Circle Dr., Scottsbluff
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 pm—6:00	Room 045, Craft State Office Building, 200 S Silber, North Platte
March 15 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 pm—6:00	1821 N 73rd, Service Coordination Conference Room Omaha
March 17 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 pm—6:00	Gold Building, 1033 "O" St, Room 534, Lincoln
March 26 <sup>th</sup>	5:00 pm—7:00	Ramada Inn, 301 Second Avenue, Kearney
March 30 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 pm—6:00	Video Conference— Ainsworth, BSDC, Grand Island, Kearney, Lincoln Executive, Norfolk, Omaha, O'Neill, Scottsbluff

## OMNI Behavioral Health Introduces the ITMS Teams

By: Stacy Bliss Fudge, Ph.D.  
Licensed Psychologist  
Intensive Treatment Mobility Services  
Omni Behavioral Health

The OMNI Behavioral Health Intensive Treatment Mobility Services teams (ITMS) began providing team behavioral consultation (TBC) services to individuals in October of 2009. The goal of ITMS is to assist individuals with challenging behaviors and their teams in developing positive methods of behavior support. ITMS teams are comprised of a licensed therapist and two intervention specialists, all with experience and training in the developmental disability field. All teams receive clinical supervision from a licensed psychologist.

The ITMS team uses evidence-based practices that emphasize the purpose of behavior and have been

shown to result in positive outcomes. Consultations are multi-disciplinary and include input from the individual, the individual's team, and other professionals.

The ITMS consultation process consists of five weeks of intensive assessments and supports. During week 1, a comprehensive functional behavior assessment is conducted. Week 2 involves further observation and development of an intervention plan. The intervention plan is implemented in week 3 and all staff are trained in the implementation. Week 4 provides time for monitoring the plan and completion of any additional training and the intervention plan is evaluated in week 5. After the initial five weeks, ITMS conducts up to six months of follow-up to evaluate the progress made by the individual, make any needed adjustments to the plan, and provide any training requested by the provider agency.

In addition to consultation services, ITMS offers training to provider agencies on various topics, including: developing rapport, behavior management skills, basics of developmental disabilities, the use of reinforcement, developing staff communication, and individual diagnoses such as autism, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or anxiety. Agencies can access the training component of ITMS at any time and do not need an active consultation case. For further information on possible trainings, contact Stacy Bliss Fudge, Ph.D. at (402) 397-9866, ext. 140.

If an individual team is interested in obtaining an ITMS consultation, the service coordinator can contact Susan Feyen, MSW, LIMHP at (402) 397-9866, ext 108 in Omaha or Melissa Koch, MS, LIMHP at (402) 223-3843 in Lincoln/greater Nebraska.

# Successful Transitions...

By **Jerry Crisp**  
Public Information Officer,  
DHHS Communications &  
Legislative Services

Ensuring a successful transition from BSDC to community-based services depends on a close collaboration among the individual, their family members and guardians, BSDC team members, community service providers, and service coordination. A prime example is **Shirley Henson's** move in 2008 from BSDC, where she had lived since 1944, to Cozad, Nebraska.

"**Mary Jane Reinhard**, Shirley's cousin and co-guardian, asked me in the summer of 2008 about Shirley moving closer to family, and **Helen Henson**, her sister-in-law and co-guardian, agreed," explains **Jane Harms**, then a BSDC Social Worker. "Service Coordinator Supervisor

**Cheryl Bales** in the DHHS North Platte office contacted local service providers, and in November South Central Developmental Services in Cozad agreed to support Shirley."

Shirley, her cousin and the BSDC team then visited the Cozad program and liked what they saw but felt an overnight stay would familiarize Shirley with her new home and give staff an opportunity to learn her needs.

Shirley needs oxygen to help her breathe, so Facility Maintenance Specialist, **Stan Miller**, added a device to her wheelchair to hold two tanks for trips.

"We stopped once on the 4-hour trip to exchange one of the tanks," says Treatment Specialist, **Karen Engelman**. "Without Stan's help, we would've had to stop twice."

Engelman and Developmental Technician II **Jennifer Seibolt**, traveled to Cozad with Shirley and found a warm welcome.

"Staff there couldn't have been nicer," Karen reports. "They had supper ready for us, and it felt like a true family gathering. I knew we would miss Shirley terribly but felt good about leaving her in such capable and caring hands."

"South Central staff were eager to learn all about Shirley's health issues, routine and personal likes and dislikes and were easy to talk with," says Jennifer Seibolt.

South Central staff, the BSDC team, Service Coordinator **Kylie Joyce** and Shirley's cousin later met to finalize details.

"A couple of things weren't quite in place, but South Central people hopped in a car, got items needed, and took care of things right away," says Engelman.

"They understood clearly that you have to look at people, not just paper," adds Harms.

Shirley Henson moved to South Central Developmental Services in Cozad just before Christmas 2008.

"Three other individuals have also transitioned to South Central, and all moves have gone smoothly," says Harms. South Central is a wonderful provider, and Kylie Joyce has been a joy to work with."

"Karen and Jane are wonderful ladies," says Kylie Joyce. "It's been a pleasure to work with them."



(l-r) Jennifer Seibolt, Jane Harms and Karen Engelman Photo: Jerry Crisp

## ...Lead to Endless Possibilities

By **Kylie Joyce**  
Developmental Disabilities  
Service Coordinator,  
DHHS Cozad office

While each person who moves to this area has had success, I really enjoy the bond **Shirley Henson** has formed with her family. Even though they had the opportunity to visit her when she lived at BSDC, now that she is closer, they are able to visit more often.

She smiles and vocalizes when her cousin **Mary Jane Reinhard** and her husband, **Karl**, come to call. The last time they came, Mary Jane reached out to shake her hand, but staff asked, “Shirley, don’t you want to give Mary Jane a hug?” Shirley wrapped her arms around Mary Jane, and her cousin’s eyes swelled with tears.

You could feel their connection. It’s moments like this that make you appreciate the opportunity Shirley now has to be in closer proximity to nurture family bonds.

Shirley has also experienced new activities and events. She recently attended a concert, which she loved, and purchased souvenirs — a sequined gold hat and a pair of fashionable sunglasses.

A very social lady, she enjoys being around others, and others enjoy being around her. She will often do the grocery shopping for her and her house mates. Shirley puts grocery items from her list in a basket with staff’s assistance and places items on the check-out counter. Grocery store employees

know Shirley by name, and she loves this interaction.

Shirley is an active member of her household. She takes turns with cooking, sets the table and pours fruit and vegetables into bowls.

Shirley also works with adaptive switches to enhance her independence at home. Some appliances she has been able to operate are a can opener and a blender, and she also turns her fan and lights off and on.

The possibilities for Shirley’s learning and growth are endless. She is an active participant in her life, and it is amazing to see what she is truly capable of and what she wants her life to be!

EDITOR’S NOTE: “Karen Engelman later wrote Kylie Joyce to say, “I miss Shirley’s hugs but am glad she can see her family more. It would be easier to say goodbye if we knew individuals were in such capable hands. I will send holiday cards and hope someone can help her write back. I’d love to continue a connection with her.”



Shirley Henson enjoys a keyboard given to her by her cousin, Mary Jane Reinhard, and her husband, Karl, for Christmas. Photo: Kylie Joyce

Kylie Joyce responded, “Shirley is a joy, and we are so happy to have her here with us in Cozad. I expect you’ll be receiving a card from Ms. Henson! We think about you wonderful ladies often and are truly thankful for everything you have done to make the move for Shirley and others a success. A million praises for you guys!”

## “We’re All in this Together”

### The Arc of Nebraska’s 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

By: Marla Fischer-Lempke  
Executive Director  
Arc of Nebraska

Each spring, the Arc of Nebraska hosts its annual conference. We have had the opportunity to host the event in various locations with Nebraskans from across the state in attendance. This year, our conference will take place on Friday, April 9th and Saturday, April 10, 2010 in Lincoln at St. Mark’s church located at 8550 Pioneers Boulevard.

The conference begins at 12:30

p.m. on April 9th, and offers workshops targeted to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The sessions will be followed by an annual awards banquet and screening of the film “*A Friend Indeed – The Bill Sackter Story.*” The conference continues Saturday with a one-day workshop for all attendees featuring international speaker, Darcy Elks, who will provide a presentation on “The Power of Roles.” We are grateful to the Value-Based Education Coalition and Nebraska

Advocacy Services, Inc., *The Center for Disability Rights, Law, and Advocacy* for providing support to make Darcy’s presence possible.

We strongly urge everyone to take advantage of the early-bird registration option for conference events. To learn more about conference sessions and registration, please contact Marla Fischer-Lempke at 402-475-4407 or [marla\\_arcneb@inebraska.com](mailto:marla_arcneb@inebraska.com). You can also visit The Arc of Nebraska Web site at [www.arc-nebraska.org](http://www.arc-nebraska.org).

## “Spread the Word to End the Word”

Special Olympics launched a new campaign called “Spread the Word to End the Word” to raise awareness about the hurtful nature of the R-word. This campaign aims to change the perception that the R-word is, harmless and acceptable. The stereotypes conveyed by R-word impedes any further progress for individuals for with developmental disabilities.

Please join Special Olympics and thousands of others that are raising awareness in order to eliminating this word. The annual day of awareness for “Spread the Word to End the Word” is on March 3. For more information or to pledge not to say the R-word please visit

[www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org).

## Volunteers Needed!!

Taking a little time from your busy schedule will give you the chance to be a part of something amazing. This year the 2010 National Special Olympics are being held July 18-23 in Lincoln Nebraska. This may be one of the largest sporting events to ever come to this state. Without the support of 8000 volunteers the Special Olympics would not be possible. Volunteers are needed July 17-24 (one day before and after the Special Olympics). Volunteers help with almost all aspects of the Olympics from set up to registration to sports to ceremonies. If you would like to volunteer or for more information please visit:

[www.2010specialolympics.org](http://www.2010specialolympics.org)

# Special Education preps BSDC students for public

By **Jerry Crisp**

Public Information Officer,  
DHHS Communications &  
Legislative Services

As anyone who has ever been a teacher or a student knows, teaching anyone anything can constitute a real challenge for both. Two teachers, **Dianne Springer** and **Cathy Schock**, have been meeting the challenge of helping prepare students at BSDC for the public school system.

According to Beatrice State Developmental Center CEO **Dan Howell**, the ultimate goal of special education for students at BSDC is that all individuals can be included in a public school system.

“That might mean they attend for only one or two hours daily,” Schock explains. “And CEO Dan Howell has said that if we need to be there with them to help them succeed, then that’s what we’ll

do.”

Dianne Springer began teaching at BSDC in 1974.

“The challenge in any classroom is to find the right approach to turn students on to learning,” she says. “I start by establishing rapport and sprinkling in lots of encouragement, and that seems to work.”

Springer recalls a boy who was easily embarrassed because he wasn’t able to tie his shoes.

“As often as possible, I would take him aside and work with him one-on-one,” she says. “When he wasn’t distracted by trying to succeed in front of others, he graduated his shoe-tying program.”

Asked about teaching awards or honors, Springer says “My successes aren’t sitting on a shelf or in a display case but out there walking around on campus and in the community. It’s nice to know that something I was part of

helped students achieve their own success.”

Springer’s philosophy is that, “Everyone has the ability to learn—we just need to discover what’s important or interesting to the student and build from there.” She also believes strongly that teaching is not just something that happens in a classroom but at home and everywhere else.

“Teaching is everyone’s job,” she says. “We’re all teachers.” Cathy Schock started teaching at BSDC in 1988.

“You need to make something interesting for students if you really want them to learn,” she says.

Schock tries to provide a stimulating environment to motivate learning whenever possible.

“On Thursdays, we go to ceramics class,” Schock explains. “Shaping materials with your own hands into something useful or beautiful builds pride and lets them know that they have control within their environment and can even shape their future.”

Schock and Springer also use field trips to stir student interest. “When surrounded by new sights and sounds, their senses come alive, and they’re ready to learn. We try to turn those experiences into learning opportunities.”

Most of us have at least one or more special teachers who will always hold a special place not only in our minds but in our hearts. Countless BSDC students feel this way about Dianne Springer and Cathy Schock.



(l-r) Special Education Teachers Dianne Springer and Cathy Schock

Photo: Jerry Crisp

# Campus apartments ready BSDC residents for community life

By **Jerry Crisp**

Public Information Officer,  
DHHS Communications &  
Legislative Services

Single-occupancy apartments on the south edge of the Beatrice State Developmental Center (BSDC) help individuals to polish skills for community living.

Four people moved into those apartments in January, and as each person transitions to community based services, another may take their place in the apartments to prepare for the journey.

“The apartments are four bedrooms with a central coed area,” says **Pam Spier-Edmond**, Assistant Administrator for Neighborhood Services at BSDC. “Direct support professionals and their teams have done a superb job of preparing individuals, teaching skills and encouraging folks to have confidence in their futures.”

Hourly meetings are also held five

nights each week to help the apartment dwellers share concerns and find answers to questions they have about their new living arrangements.

“Be proud of yourselves,” Spier-Edmond tells them. “You’ve accomplished a lot, and you’re blazing a trail for others to follow!”

“When individuals ask who will do their cooking, housekeeping and laundry,” she adds, “I tell them *you* will. They’re bound to have some hesitancy about this major change in their lives, but they all have a desire to be independent, and that’s important.”

Spier-Edmond was almost moved to tears when one of the individuals told her, “When they told me I would be moving, I knew I would have some problems to deal with, but I also knew that God had answered my prayers. I just need to remember what staff have taught me and use my



Now living in a transitional apartment on the BSDC campus, Arlys Butler prepares something to eat—one of many skills that will help her succeed in the community. Photo:

skills.”

“Successful community transitions are of paramount importance to both the people who are making the transition and to BSDC,” says CEO **Dan Howell**. “By creating and supporting an environment that allows people to transition into receiving services from other providers, we enhance their possibility of success. In the end, this is how we will measure our success.”

## Vocational Rehabilitation: Creative Collaboration

By **Dennis King**, Nebraska Vocational Rehab Program Director

Individuals who participate in the Community Support Program (CSP) have access to a supported employment option to help people find jobs. Through this option, individuals can select and hire their own provider, such as a family member, neighbor, or other trusted person in the community to provide the initial job coaching and necessary ongoing supports on the job. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is collaborating with CSP to fund the

selected provider for some start-up employment services.

Individuals statewide may be interested in this option in lieu of services with traditional providers. VR is very supportive of CSP and sees this as an excellent opportunity to collaborate and offer employment as a real alternative to individuals.

Vocational Rehabilitation has developed policies and procedures

for staff to ensure an efficient and effective collaborative effort, and training has been provided to all staff on this exciting option. A packet of information that describes VR’s supported employment, reporting forms, and billing documents is distributed. A job coach training manual is being developed and will be available to the CSP Providers soon!.

# Collaboration of Three Agencies Brings Success for Lincoln Man

By: Stacy Bliss Fudge, Ph.D.  
Intensive Treatment Mobility Services  
Omni Behavioral Health

## Matt needed a home.

Matt had been having difficulty with his behaviors and had been physically aggressive at home and at work. In October of 2009, the OMNI Behavioral Health Intensive Treatment Mobility Services team was contacted to assist in developing interventions to help Matt address his behaviors. Despite everyone's efforts, Matt's services were terminated and he found himself without a home.

minated and he found himself without a home.

Matt stayed in an OMNI Behavioral Health emergency foster home for two weeks until he moved to a home in Lincoln supported by Integrated Life Choices (ILC). ILC was willing to support Matt, but needed help while they hired and trained staff. In the interim, the utmost concern was meeting Matt's needs and ensuring his safety. In order to help, BSDC staffed Matt's apartment for three months. ILC then had the time to

locate quality staff and to provide them with the training they needed to help Matt be successful in his new home. It was not always smooth, but through the cooperation of BSDC, ILC, and OMNI Behavioral Health, Matt discovered he could be successful in his new home.

Currently, Matt lives in his apartment, and all the ILC staff working with him have been hired and trained.

# Mosaic: Building a Future

Article and Photos provided by:  
Randall Donner, Communications and Ministry Partners Director Mosaic

Offering people new living options is the goal of a joint project between Mosaic, a Nebraska-based provider of services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and the Nebraska DHHS Division of Developmental Disabilities.

Mosaic will open 11 new homes for 66 people by December in four Nebraska communities. Six of the homes will be Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded (ICF/MR), two will be Centers of Developmental Disabilities (CDD), and three will be Medical Service Units (MSU) licensed as CDD homes.

"We're offering people the opportunity to live in and be a part of the community and receive a high level of care and oversight," said Tammy Westfall, Vice President for Mosaic's Nebraska Region. "Mosaic is excited to be a part of it."

Residents of the Beatrice State Developmental Center and former BSDC residents who are in hospitals or nursing homes have been given the option to move into these new homes. Mosaic staff members are working with state service coordinators and BSDC staff to assess the needs of individuals who have expressed an interest in the new homes to ensure that their needs can be effectively met.

Placed in residential

neighborhoods, each residence will be home to six people. Most of the homes are being built with individual bedrooms and bathrooms, and with a shared kitchen, dining room, living room and laundry room. Each also will have a yard for relaxation and recreation. Additionally, some of the homes will feature amenities such as a whirlpool bath, therapy room, ceiling track lift systems, and emergency generators. While the style and design varies, all of the homes are new construction.

All of the homes will have 24-hour staffing, and each will have a registered nurse on staff for at least eight hours a day, with some having 24-hour nurse staffing.

The first homes are scheduled to open in March. They include an ICF/MR in Grand Island, and an ICF/MR and CDD in Omaha. Additional homes will be built in Omaha (two ICFs/MR and two MSUs), Grand Island (MSU), Norfolk (one ICF/MR and one CDD), and York (ICF/MR).



# ENCOR: Home Sweet Home



By: Nancy Cahill, MSU Director

It's been a long journey for the individuals who call 9270 Ames Avenue home. Formerly living at the Beatrice State Developmental Center, 7 individuals with complex medical needs began moving into the house beginning October 19<sup>th</sup>. Prior to that time they lived in hospitals and nursing homes throughout Omaha and Lincoln since they left BSDC in early February 2009.

The 4,200 square foot home is located in northwest Omaha and has 5 bedrooms, a large living room and family room. It has a spacious yard with many mature trees. The home was purchased in June and underwent 3 months of renovation. Eve-



All photos of the MSU ENCOR home provided by Joyce Werner

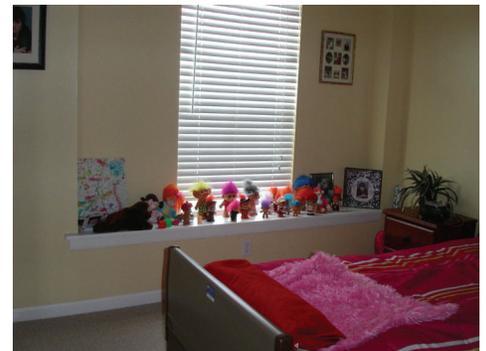
ryone was enthusiastic about decorating the new home, and there have been many positive comments regarding the décor of the house.

During the months prior to the move, the individuals, families and guardians, ENCOR staff, state Service Coordinators and BSDC staff were involved in activities to ease the transition of people to their new home. BSDC staff provided valuable information to ENCOR staff concerning the people they knew so well. Furthermore staff at Creighton University Medical Center and University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, and Bryan LGH and St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Lincoln shared information in order to assist with the transition. The strong teamwork among the parties involved generated a very positive outcome.

The medical needs of the people supported at the Medical Support Unit (MSU) are met by nursing professionals who provide a variety of medical and habilitation supports. In addition to Registered Nurses who provide direct nursing support, certified nurses aides provide assistance with activities of daily living. The MSU utilizes the services of specialists such as occupational, physical, speech, and massage therapists to enhance physical and developmental growth. This is the second MSU that

ENCOR operates; the first one relocated to a group home in 1984 from Douglas County Hospital. ENCOR has been supporting individuals who require medical supports since 1972.

Since their move to Omaha and the Medical Support Unit, individuals have been getting reacquainted with the Omaha community. Some have attended services at St. James Catholic Church; others have shopped for clothing and helped pick out decorative items for their



rooms. Individuals help with grocery shopping and enjoy cultural activities throughout the city. They were also involved with decorating their home for the holidays. Their families and guardians are frequent visitors at the house.

It's amazing how much has been accomplished in such a short period of time. The teamwork displayed by the individuals from BSDC, their families/guardians, state service coordination and BSDC staff, ENCOR staff, and medical professionals is commendable. Everyone working together not only assured a smooth transition, but also helped to make all of the individuals comfortable in their new home.

## Stay in the Loop!

If you would like to continue to receive this newsletter, please let us know!

To help us keep costs down, if you are willing to receive the *Sower* electronically, please send an email to [DHHS.DevelopmentalDisabilities@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.DevelopmentalDisabilities@nebraska.gov) or you can subscribe online at <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/newsletters/sower/> by clicking on the "subscribe to this newsletter" link.

## BSDC Helping Hands



Individuals from BSDC work together to make health kits for residents of Haiti who lost their homes after recent earthquakes.

*Photo by Patrick Ethridge/Daily Sun Editor*

## Autism Center Provides Employment Opportunities

*By Jack Shepard, Autism Center of Nebraska*

The Autism Center of Nebraska (ACN) received a grant, effective October 1, 2009, from Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation. ACN will develop and implement an effective and much needed supported employment program specifically tailored to the unique needs of individuals with autism.

This project will also include individuals on the autism spectrum including individuals who are eligible for services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), as well as individuals who do not, such as persons with Asperger's Syndrome. Short-term job coaching services will be made available for individuals who are not eligible for DDD services. Emphasis is also being given to students transitioning from Special Education, including those between ages 18 and 21.

ACN will develop and make available job-based assessments for individuals with autism. These will be conducted at ACN's vocational

center and area businesses as appropriate.

ACN will also develop a marketing program and consult with businesses who have employed, or are considering employing individuals with autism. ACN will also publicize a number that businesses may contact for assistance after the job coaching support has been reduced.

ACN is working in close coordination with the Omaha area Metro VR offices and area schools. ACN has developed an advisory board that includes area business professionals to assist in the implementation of the program. Two part-time Employment Coordinators have been hired to develop and implement services. The services developed through this grant will be sustainable as VR and DDD fees for services will be available for eligible individuals.

## Lone Rose



by: Alyssa Shirley- Hicks  
Poetry from Northstar

A lone crimson rose blooms over  
the path where I stand.  
She blooms...in a dear misunderstanding  
standing unknown  
She blooms...next to the black  
crow  
Where must she bloom with dear  
thorns that she bears?  
Where is it she stands?  
In pathways and hallways under  
the moon's light.  
Shine.  
In a night sky, above the stars.  
Let me hear a chorus where no  
one is  
missing  
And we all stand in a cycle where  
a lone rose blooms.



**Division of Developmental Disabilities**

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# Calendar of Events!



## MARCH

- 8 Stakeholders Meeting (Scottsbluff)
- 9 Stakeholders Meeting (North Platte)
- 12 NASP Meeting (Lincoln)
- 15 Stakeholders Meeting (Omaha)
- 17 Stakeholders Meeting (Lincoln)
- 24 NPN Meeting (Lincoln)
- 25-26 DD Summit (Lincoln/Kearney)
- 26 Stakeholders Meeting (Kearney)
- 30 Stakeholders Meeting (Video Conference)

## APRIL

- 9-10 ARC Convention (Lincoln)
- 16 DD Townhall Meeting (Lincoln, NSOB LLB)

- 18 Region V Fine Arts Festival and Dance (Shriner's Hall, Lincoln)

## JUNE

- 5 Region V Picnic and Advisory Committee Meeting (Pioneer's Park, Lincoln)

## JULY

- 18-23 National Special Olympics

## OCTOBER

- 2 Region V Dinner Dance (Pershing, Lincoln)

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