

THE UMBRELLA



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Fall 2015

TRIP TO HAWAII

Mandy Shay, DSP



Dan Foss dreamed of going to Hawaii for many years and often talked about going there with his mother. After months of saving, Dan saved enough money through Search Beyond to fulfill this dream. Sadly, Dan's mother passed away and she couldn't make this trip with him. In her memory, Dan made plans to leave for Hawaii on February 26th; the anniversary of his mother's passing. After months of planning, Dan headed to the Watertown Airport and left for Hawaii.

Dan stayed in a hotel outside Honolulu. His first visit was the Waikiki Aquarium in Honolulu, the second oldest aquarium in the United States.

Dan talked about how exciting this was for him; he had never seen anything like it before. Dan took pictures of the different types of fish and enjoyed all the varieties and sizes of the aquatic animals. He also got the opportunity to go to the Polynesian Cultural Center. This was a really fun experience for Dan; he got to see all the different cultures of Hawaii. Dan got the opportunity to see traditional Hawaiian dancing, customs, and eat traditional Hawaiian food. Dan said that he learned so much while being at the Polynesian Cultural Center and it was very interesting to see how different their culture is from ours.

One of Dan's favorite places was the Pearl Harbor memorial. He talked about the different theaters where you could learn about the attack on Pearl Harbor. Dan said this was very interesting to him and he learned many things that he didn't know before. The list of new experiences Dan had while in Hawaii is a long one. He was able to see a volcano called Diamond Head. Dan said that he didn't go up close on the hike, but he did get to look at it from a distance and bought post cards. Dan also got to try traditional Thai food for the first time; he said it was delicious! Dan also visited the Dole Pineapple Plantation and Waikiki Beach. Dan talked about Hawaii with a huge smile on his face and expressed repeatedly how beautiful it was. He said there were palm trees everywhere, banana trees, and pineapples growing out of the ground! As all vacations do end, on March 4th Dan left Hawaii and headed back home. Dan came home with a few souvenirs, many pictures, and his favorite memento, a plaque with all of the Hawaiian Islands on it. After many years of dreaming and talking about going to Hawaii, Dan can finally mark this off of his bucket list. Dan said this was an experience of a life time for him, and if he has the chance he would love to go back.

GAINING INDEPENDENCE

Jodi Johnson, SC

Beth Amundson resides at the 1029 Gilbert Ave. group home. She has achieved important independence by gaining the ability to travel alone. Beth began in March by learning about riding the bus to travel to Sioux Falls and meet with her mom. She had many questions and insecurities about traveling and the trip. Staff answered her questions and helped her feel more comfortable. In May Beth took her first solo bus trip to meet her mom. Everyone was a bit nervous and there were many phone calls back and forth, between staff and her mom, to ensure that everything went smoothly. Beth has made the trip twice since then and is going again in September. Now she is able to tell staff all of the steps she needs to take so that she can ride the bus to meet her mom.

In giving Beth the opportunity to grow independently, she has gained self-esteem, independence, knowledge, a new transportation mode, confidence in her abilities, and freedom to travel.



FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

Chuck Sherman, PhD

I continue to be frustrated by losing some of our best professional staff in Behavioral Health to other state funded employers. This is not to say we lost an employee who became a state employee. No. They left because they can make more money, work fewer hours, have much better fringe benefits and not have to be on call by becoming an employee of a school system. State-funded schools have their state retirement system fully funded every year. We have not been able to contribute to our employees' retirement system for more than six years.

How is it that schools became eligible for the state retirement system? Why is it that city and county employees are eligible for the state retirement system? They are not state employees.

Why are schools, which are privately run, with a board of directors, exactly the same as state

funded mental health centers and community support providers eligible to be part of the state retirement system?

Health insurance coverage is another huge benefit difference. Our deductible in our health insurance plan is now \$2,000 compared to the state plan with a \$500 deductible. Not even close. Our employees have to pay \$50 a month for health insurance and yet state employees pay nothing.

State employees get a cost of living increase every year plus another 2.5% if they are below the midpoint on the salary range, regardless of performance. This is way beyond what we can afford to give our employees based on what the state gives us each year in rate increases; if we get any increase at all. We didn't receive any increase for five years!

I've said it before and I'll say it again and loudly. **Community**

mental health centers and community support providers are treated as second class citizens in this state.

We are tasked to take care of the most vulnerable people - people with severe disabilities, people handicapped by hallucinations and demons and yet we are not given the same benefits as other state funded entities. Not even close.

I wonder what it would take to pass legislation that would simply tie community mental health centers and community support providers to all of the same funding increases that other state supported agencies receive. If state employees receive a 3% cost of living increase, plus another 2.5% if below mid-point in their salary range, we would receive the same. It doesn't address the much richer benefits in health and retirement, but at least it would begin to treat us the same.

Just a thought.

*****NEW HORIZONS*****

WEEKEND FISHING

Sharyl Sauer, DSP

For two weeks we worked at preparing to go fishing, and all that it entails. Staff asked the guys many questions to get them into the thinking mode. When asked what we would need first, both replied fishing licenses; which Staff received from the agency. Next their fishing equipment needed inspection. One person had a tackle box, some lures, and other necessary items, but the other came with his rod, a small container of little rubber crawdads, and 2 small bobbers. When staff mentioned worms like wet leaves, they went worm hunting in the back of the house by the bushes. What bright eyes they had when they came to show off their container of worms! They loaded their fishing equipment, chairs, and a small ice chest one of them bought to store pop and water into the car. We decided our destination would be a spot on the north shore of Pelican Lake; it is close and still in town.

The men unloaded their equipment, set up their chairs and started to bait their hooks while we watched their progress. Both men cast out their lines, but one person's line ended up drifting into tree branches in the water. He tried to un snag his line but it broke and he lost his tackle and bobber. Staff, ready to help, retied his swivel and line, and replaced his hook and sinker while the guys watched!

They moved their spots past the downed tree and branches. Both guys had a few nibbles, when a person supported who accompanied us on our fishing trip spotted a white duck swimming next to the shore where the guys just recently had been. The duck was fishing off the bottom of the lake, with its bottom in the air and head under the water! I mentioned to her to sit quietly and let the duck surprise the guys as it was moving around the little cove toward where they were sitting. Within a minute or two, the guys were pointing and mouthing to us, "There is a duck! There is a duck just swimming right next to us!" She squealed with delight! The guys loaded up their equipment, and checked that nothing was left behind, closed the trunk, and home we went! On the way home everyone was happy, and wanted to know when we could do this again!

*****BEHAVIORAL HEALTH*****

MAYOR'S COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Lori Enstad, CARE

The Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities was established in 2003 with the purpose of promoting equal access, employment and housing for people with disabilities. Its members include people with disabilities, parents and others who are interested in assisting people with physical and mental disabilities to become accepted within the community. Each year, in recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness month in October, recognition is given to businesses and people who work to improve opportunities for those with disabilities.

The MCPD recently announced this years **Distinguished Service Award** will be presented to **Dee Nogelmeier**. The Distinguished Service Award is given to an individual in public recognition of extraordinary contributions to advancing the empowerment and employment of people with disabilities, spanning at least 10 years.

Dee has been employed with the Human Service Agency for 29 years. When she began at the agency she oversaw an in-house first class presort mailing program. Since then she has been a Case Manager and Representative Payee and also serves as liaison with the Human Services Center.

The Mayor's Awards will be presented during a luncheon at the County Fair Banquet Hall on October 22nd at 11:30.

Congratulations Dee!!!

HSA SUMMER PICNIC



The HSA Annual Summer Picnic was held on September 3rd. The picnic committee outdid themselves this year by putting on a Carnival themed picnic! Everyone had a great time eating and playing games! The pie-eating contest was a great spectator sport! Everyone enjoyed the Photo Booth, Basketball Free Throw, Duck Shoot, Dart Board, Bean Bags and the Washer Toss! The food was traditional carnival fare – Corn dogs, Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Caramel & Apples, Pickles on a Stick, and best of all.....Cotton Candy!

Employees also were able to enter their Baked Goods, Garden Produce or Canned Goods for prizes!

Great job Picnic Committee!!!



The Human Service Agency is a private, non-profit organization served by a Board of Directors representing the communities served by the Agency. The Board of Directors meets at 5:30 p.m. on the last Monday of each month.

**THE DIVISIONS OF THE
HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY ARE:**

New Horizons and
HSA Behavioral Health

Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Help for mental health or chemical dependency emergencies is available at all times by calling 886-5841 or 800-444-3989



**The Human Service Agency Foundation –
An Investment In The Future**

The Human Service Agency Foundation was established to promote the long-term financial strength of the Human Service Agency. Charitable contributions and bequests to the Foundation are administered by recognized financial experts for the benefit of the Agency's programs. The Foundation provides, at no cost to the individual, confidential assistance for those considering charitable giving as a part of their long range financial planning.

For More Information, Call or Write:

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