

Renee Uitto, CLS/OC Citizens' Advisory Committee Chairperson



DECEMBER 2012

BETHANY CHASE – BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!



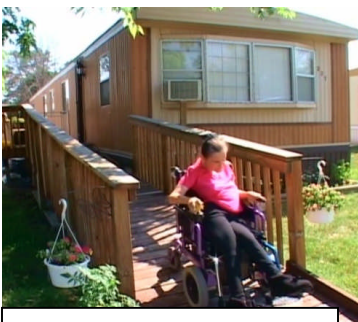
Bethany Chase lives in her own home in White Lake with her daughter Alison, her cat Abby, and her dog Princess. Bethany her independent life and her ability to get out in her community and do the things she enjoys.

Despite having significant physical disabilities, Bethany doesn't let anything slow her down. Bethany was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy at 2 1/2 years old. It was her mother who first taught her that she could do anything she wanted to do with her life as long as she worked hard and believed in herself; now Bethany shares this message of hope and inspiration with others.



Bethany with her daughter Alison.

Bethany is going on her 14th year working at Wal-mart as a greeter. She uses her electric wheelchair to get back and forth to work independently, even in bad weather. She works five days a week in the afternoons, is well liked by her co-workers, and looks forward to going to work everyday. Bethany says that the best part of her job is that she has met a lot of interesting people. Because she has worked there so long, she has developed many relationships with her co-workers and the Wal-mart shoppers and she enjoys being able to routinely catch up on what is going on in their lives.



Bethany leaving her home and heading to work.

Bethany has enjoyed helping others by volunteering her time

through program where people contacted senior citizens and homebound individuals to provide her support, even if it was just providing someone for the folks to talk to. Bethany hopes to expand her supportive role to other avenues in the future, including potentially becoming a Peer Mentor at some point in the future.

Bethany Chase describes herself as a truly "self-determined" person. She hires her own staff and also uses the assistance of a staffing agency and an Independent Support Coordinator. Bethany describes the idea of Self-Determination as an "extension" of herself. She indicates that Self-Determination allows her to do things she would not otherwise be able to do. Bethany has an individual budget that she uses to hire the support people she needs to help her live independently and to be active in her community. She receives a monthly budget report from her Fiscal Intermediary to help her track the costs of her services. Bethany indicates that she likes hiring her own staff because it gives her control over her life and she can choose who she works with and who she does not. In addition to supports provided through her individual budget, Bethany also receives much support from her friends and family.



Bethany believes that life should be fun and that all things are possible when you believe in yourself. Bethany's successes show us that, given the right supports, anyone can accomplish anything that they set their mind to. She doesn't let much get in the way of what she wants in life and no matter what is going on in her life, she is determined to be independent and work hard just like her beloved mother taught her so many years ago.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The sun shines, not on us, but in us."

John Muir

FOR GOALS OF SELF-DETERMINATION

By Renee Utto



Self-Determination is a very important part of my life. I have the freedom to make my own choices. I have the authority to spend dollars for my support. I have the responsibility to make sure that public funding is used wisely and efficiently. I also

have the support to create my life dreams and reach them. And I affirm my role in leadership by participating in committees, public forums, voting, and making sure my voice is heard.

I see these four goals as key of a person achieving true Self-Determination in their life. These affect me personally and I talk about each goal when I give presentations about Self-Determination. They are:

- A place to call home, with full control over who enters my home
- Real membership in my community
- The development of strong relationships
- Planning to avoid or emerge from personal impoverishment.

Each of these goals are very important to me; they speak to me directly. I feel they apply to ALL people in our society.

By directing my supports through a Self-Determination arrangement, I always decide who enters my home - nobody comes and goes through MY front door without MY permission. I enjoy routinely getting out into my community - to run my errands, to the bookstore, the mall, grocery shopping, etc. The people in my community have come to know me. I have strong personal and professional relationships. I enjoy spending time with family and friends. I love to meet friends at the mall and we have lunch and go shopping. I also have a strong personal relationship with all of my caregivers that I hire using my individual budget. I also make sure my finances are in order and I pay my bills on time.

Following the principles of Self-Determination helps me stay responsible and accountable, while being empowered and supported to lead a great life of independence and pride in my community. I hope my hearing my goals and successes has helped you understand the purpose of Self-Determination arrangements better.

DISABILITY.GOV INITIATIVE “WHAT’S YOUR CONNECTION”

Disability.gov is a federal government website that is commemorating the 10th anniversary of their site with an initiative that



emphasizes how disability touches lives. The “What’s Your Connection?” initiative emphasizes the connection among all people, and reinforces the idea that people with disabilities, even those who don’t identify as having a disability are not separate, but an integral part of American Society.

People nationwide are being asked to share their stories. Let people know how having a disability or knowing someone with a disability has touched your life by: submitting a photograph with a 250-word maximum caption, or uploading a captioned, one-minute YouTube video that answers the question,

“What’s Your Connection?” The initiative runs October 30, 2012 through July



31, 2013, and will use social media, traditional media and grassroots tactics to spark conversations and build support for inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. Participants should send their photograph and caption to disability@dol.gov. Video submissions should be uploaded on YouTube and include the hashtag, #myconnections2, in the title. For more information and details on the “What’s Your Connection?” initiative visit Disability.gov at: https://www.disability.gov/home/newsroom/what's_your_connection.

Disability.gov is the federal government website for information on disability programs and services in communities nationwide. The site links to more than 14,000 resources from federal, state and local government agencies; academic institutions; and nonprofit organizations. You can find answers to questions about everything from Social Security benefits to employment to affordable and accessible housing. Plus, new information is added daily about Benefits, Civil Rights, Community Life, Education, Emergency Preparedness, Employment, Health, Housing, Technology and Transportation. Disability.gov is also a web portal, which means every time you select a resource, you will be directed to another website. To check out their website, go to www.disability.gov.

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!



Community Living Services would like to congratulate, Jeff Brown, the Executive Director of the Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority (OCCMHA) for having the distinguished honor of receiving the Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards' (MACMHB) Hal Madden Outstanding Service Award. Jeff received the award at the MACMHB Fall Conference in Traverse City. This honor recognizes the personal and professional conduct of an individual from within the public mental health system whose lifetime achievements have improved the understanding of mental health disorders, as well as enhance the lives of those who receive services.

Annette Downey, Executive Director of Community Living Services-Oakland County Division says, "It has been a pleasure working with Jeff over the past eight years. Jeff's strong work ethic, helpful personality, commitment and dedication to the people we support has been evident since we first met. Jeff has been a valuable partner and role model through the years; he demonstrates his dedication to social justice and improved quality of life for those we serve in everything he does."

In addition to his work at OCCMHA, Jeff shares his talents with the community by serving as a member of the board of directors of the National Association of County Behavioral Health and Development Directors, treasurer for the MACMHB, Area Agency on Aging 1-B Advisory Council member, and president of the Oakland Integrated Healthcare Network.

Community Network Services' Anti-Stigma team was also presented with the Partners in Excellence Award during the MACMHB Fall Conference. This prestigious honor recognizes those who have, or are currently using community mental health services, and whose actions promote a positive community image of people who have a mental health disorder.

Congratulations to all of the award winners!



Award winners: Jeff Brown of OCCMHA, and Kim Rider, Malkia Newman, and Amy Yashinsky of Community Network Services

OCCMHA 50TH ANNIVERSARY



Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority (OCCMHA) is turning 50 in 2013. For the last 50 years they have been working to advance the lives of individuals with disabilities and mental illness and now they want you to join in the celebration by sharing your stories of success!

Families and individuals who were employed by or received assistance from OCCMHA or a member of its provider network at any time in the past 50 years are encouraged to share photos and testimonials about their positive experiences and achievements. The images and narratives will be made available on OCCMHA's website (www.occmha.org) and during special 50th Anniversary presentations during 2013. Anyone who has received support and wants to be part of this celebration can email their story to RegisterMe@occmha.org or mail it to: 50th Anniversary, 2011 Executive Hills Blvd., Auburn Hills, MI 48326.

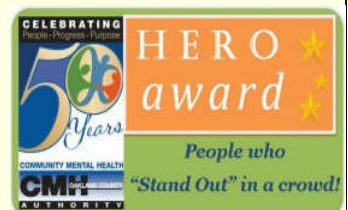
NOMINATE A HERO

In honor of OCCMHA'S upcoming 50 year anniversary, OCCMHA will recognize one individual each month throughout 2013 with a special "Hero" award.

Outstanding award nominees can include:

- ◆ Individuals who currently receive or have received services over the past five decades.
- ◆ OCCMHA and provider agency employees, past or present
- ◆ Family, friends, and neighbors
- ◆ Community advocates and leaders
- ◆ Board members and elected officials
- ◆ Anyone who has been a "HERO" for individuals with a developmental disability, mental health illness, serious emotional disturbance or substance use disorder.

If you would like a nominate a "Hero" call Diana Kaszyca at 248-547-2668 for a nomination form.



HOW WAS YOUR VOTING EXPERIENCE?



The National Council on Disability, in coordination with the National Disability Rights Network and EIN SOF Communications, are seeking feedback about your voting experience during the November elections in the form of an open-ended questionnaire. They would like to hear from voters with disabilities from across the nation; then in early 2013 they will issue a final report on their findings.

The National Council on Disability indicated that for voters in the United States, just over a quarter of polling places are accessible. A Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found in 2008, only 27 percent of polling places were barrier-free. Currently, a voter with a disability faces a nearly 75 percent chance that he or she will not be able to use their assigned polling precinct to vote. However, barriers to voting are not always physical. There are also legislative barriers, absence of Braille, inaccessible technology, stigma, and attitudinal barriers.

Clyde Terry a member of The National Council on Disability published *"To Matter, Your Right to Vote Requires Access"* on the Disability Blog at Disability.gov. Check it out at:

<http://usodep.blogs.govdelivery.com/2012/11/05/to-matter-your-right-to-vote-requires-access/>.



If you are interested in participating in the Voting Questionnaire you can go directly to the questionnaire online: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1053447/Voting>.

You can also download the questionnaire at <http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/research/VotingExperiences>.

After completing the questionnaire email it to: Voting.Questionnaire@ndrn.org or send via postal mail to: NDRN, 900 Second Street, NE, Suite 211, Washington, DC 20002.

UPCOMING EVENTS

"MOVING FORWARD" PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST/PEER MENTOR TRAINING



Training is now available for persons who are interested in potentially working as a peer support specialist/peer mentor in Oakland County. The "Moving Forward" training is a 17-hour training for individuals receiving services who have an interest in potentially working as a Peer Support Specialist/Peer Mentor. This is open to persons with developmental disabilities or mental illness. The training topics include: Role of a Peer Support Specialist, Using Your Story as a Tool, Listening and Communication, Gentle Teaching, and others. This training is one day a week for five weeks. You must attend each of the five training days. All trainings will be held at MORC, 1270 Doris Road in Auburn Hills.

2013 Session Schedule:

Winter Session—January 21, 28, February 4, 11, 18
Time: 1:00-4:30pm

Spring Session—March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1
Time: 9:00am-12:30pm

Fall Session—September 13, 20, 27 and October 4, 11
Time: 9:00am-12:30pm

For more information or to sign up for the training, contact Sherri Rushman at 248-975-9531.



SPEECHCRAFT CLASS

New sessions have been scheduled, so sign up for this great eight week class and increase your confidence speaking in front of a group or in public. Learn in a small group setting how to effectively "tell your story" and "wow" the audience with your speeches, while having fun! The classes take place every Tuesday, 1:30-3:30pm at the Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority office, 2011 Executive Hills Blvd in Auburn Hills. Speechcraft Sessions Available are: January 8–February 26 and March 5–April 23. For more information and to register for a class, contact Sherri Rushman at 248-975-9531.

THE NEXT CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Next meeting will take place on Monday, January 28th, 2:00-4:00pm
At the CLS/OC office in Ferndale
Everyone is welcome to attend.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Get ready to Party! Join friends for food, music, dancing, and socializing. Dress casual and be prepared for a good time and many laughs.

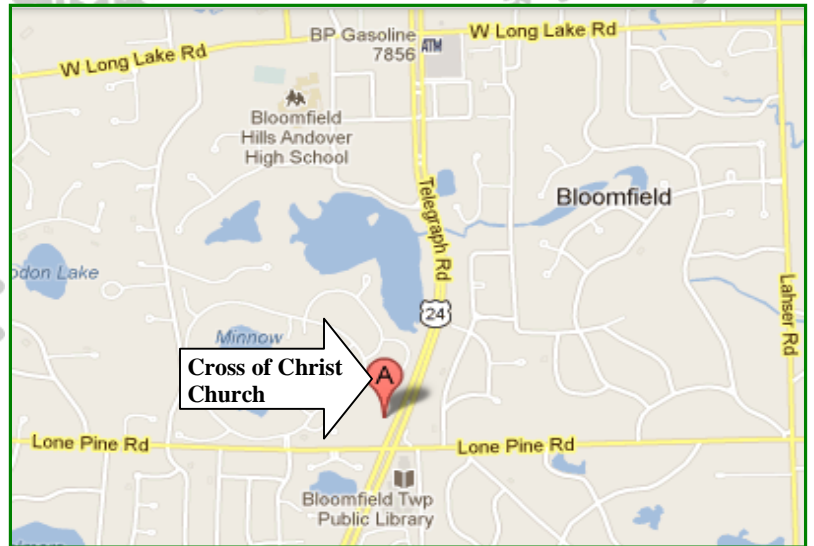
Pizza, salad, dessert, and beverages will be provided. All you have to do is put on your dancing shoes and bring \$1.00 (per person).

WHEN: Thursday, January 10, 2013,
6:30-9:00pm

Dinner will be served 6:30-8:00pm

WHERE: Cross of Christ Church
1100 Lone Pine Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302

If you have questions please call Diana Kaszyca at 248-547-2668.



NOTICE OF CLS/OC HOLIDAY HOURS

The CLS/OC office will be closed on the following days:

Christmas Holiday

Monday, December 24, 2012

Tuesday, December 25, 2012

New Years Holiday

Monday, December 31, 2012

Tuesday, January 1, 2013

In the event of an emergency, you can contact our Emergency On-Call System at 734-238-7246. This service is available between the hours of 4:30pm and 8:00am on regular business days and 24 hours a day on weekends and holidays. All other days we will maintain regular business hours of 8:00am to 4:30pm.

THINGS TO DO IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The Holly Dickens Festival is a free event and will take place December 7-9th. During the annual Holly Dickens Festival you will see the characters from Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" come to life on the streets of Historic Downtown Holly. Make special memories with your family and friends while enjoying carriage rides, caroling choirs, hot roasted chestnuts and much more. For more information visit their website. <http://www.hollychamber.com/events/Holly-Dickens-Festival-Days>



Car, Trees, and Traditions will take place November 17th through December 30th at the Walter P. Chrysler Museum in Auburn Hills. The Museum's annual holiday exhibition features 23



evergreen trees decorated with authentic ornaments from 1900s-1980s, or embellished by theme, and paired with Chrysler vehicles. The exhibit highlights seasonal celebrations in America and how traditions evolved along with the automobile. Nostalgic graphics round out the vignettes, including vintage ads, images of popular toys and historic holiday photographs. For more information check out the website at: <http://wpchryslermuseum.org/page.aspx?pid=384>

Happy Holidays

COMMUNITY
Living SERVICES

Oakland County Division

642 E. Nine Mile Road
Ferndale, MI 48220
Phone: 248-547-2668

