

-PathNotes-

A Publication of
Pathways to Independence

A Newsletter for the Members & Friends of Pathways to Independence

Fall 2008

Lisa Berg Succeeds in New Career Path

Lisa Berg started Pathways in May of 1994. Throughout the years Lisa has learned many skills at Pathways. She has hosted events and made many friends. Staff has supported her with learning individual skills that have taught her independence such as cooking, calling friends, planning independent activities, and emailing friends. These skills have helped Lisa along the way to feel more confident in her abilities.

She spent 13 years working at Barnes and Noble Books, just down the street from her house. She worked one day a week for two hours. When the store decided to move to the local mall, Lisa knew she did not want to be in that environment. At that point, Pathways staff suggested she look into working at the Lafayette Industries workshop. With her family's support, she began the process of applying for a full time job.

Lisa started her job at Lafayette Industries on August 20th. She took on the challenge of transportation by getting Call-A-Ride services. She spent many lunch breaks on the phone scheduling rides for work. She learned to advocate for herself when she had problems on the Call-A-Ride. Currently, her parents have been taking her to work and Call-A-Ride takes her home.

Lisa is very happy at her new job. She has met many new friends and enjoys her work. She is one of the fastest workers in the workshop. She does packaging and states it is her favorite thing at her new job. Lisa has learned many vocational skills throughout the years. All of her experiences have led her to her new career.

Mr. & Mrs. Berg attribute Pathways to Independence with giving Lisa the courage and confidence to tackle some of the skills above. Previously, Lisa relied on her parents for transportation, but through the encouragement and support of fellow Pathways participants, Lisa has emerged in her own independence. Congratulations to Lisa!



Sampling of Events of the Past 6 months

Math Masters
Conversation 101
Reading Club
Sunnyhill Spring Retreat
Nashville Weekend
Volunteer at Creve Coeur Park
Cosmic Bowling
Shakespeare Fest
The Munny performances
Community concerts
Grizzlies baseball game
And many, many more!

Consider donating your Anheuser-Busch stock to Pathways to Independence

- ◆ Avoid the capital gains tax on the stock's increased value
- ◆ Receive an income tax deduction equal to its fair market value
- ◆ Help Pathways to Independence make a difference in the lives of adults with severe learning disabilities

Call 314-863-0202 for more information

Got a Match?

During the upcoming giving season, you may wish to check with your employer to see if they have a **matching gifts program**. Matching gifts can double your donation to Pathways to Independence and better serve our participants. Please notify us if your employer offers this program and we will contact your employer for the appropriate paperwork. Thank you in advance for your consideration.



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Our Mission:

Pathways to Independence supports, educates, and empowers adults with learning disabilities and associated disorders to obtain the personal growth, enhanced social skills, and greater self-reliance needed for productive employment and meaningful personal relationships. We accomplish our mission through experiential education, employment preparation, recreational programs, community and volunteer activities, and family support programs.

Our Vision:

Adults with learning disabilities will enjoy a fullness of life through:

- living in a community which is accepting and offers choices
- attaining self-realization, independent living, health and security
- engaging in healthy relationships and using good judgment, and
- contributing to the community with a sense of purpose, passion, and responsibility.



BOARD BUSINESS

Board meetings are typically held monthly on the
the
4th Thursday at 4:30 p.m.

Anyone interested in attending a meeting should call the Pathways office at
(314) 863-0202 for additional information.

Pathways web address: www.pathways2independence.com

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW E MAIL ADDRESSES:

Executive Director, Craig Strohbeck: craig@pathways2independence.com

Program Manager, Rose Piel: rose@pathways2independence.com

Pathways to Independence Board of Directors

Officers

Rachel Balbach	President
Scott Clark	Vice President
Rick Boalbey	Treasurer
Nancy Koenig	Secretary

Board Members

Selma Balk
Deborah Gordon
Sharon Kircher
Susan Newman
Joan Oliver
Jack Schreiber
Alberta Slavin
Marlene Zafft

Board Resource Committee

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George Fonyo
Hazel Forster
Tere Owens
William Reardon
Arthur Hoffman
Jo Werner
R. Troy Kendrick
Gene Zafft

Pathways Staff

Craig Strohbeck	Executive Director
Rose Piel	Program Manager
Gloria Rodgers	Program Specialist
Kathi Manegre	Program Specialist
Lindsay Linderer	Program Specialist
Millie Cova	Program Specialist
Tia Rowan	Accounting

Office Address

Pathways to Independence
200 South Hanley, Ste. 507
Clayton, MO 63105
314-863-0202 Phone
314-863-7865 Fax

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Contributions & Tributes April through August 2008

Our deepest gratitude goes to all those who continue to support Pathways to Independence

Benefactor

Arthur & Helen Baer Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Sam Benton
Dr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Gordon
Ms. Ruth Siteman

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Mr. & Mrs. Susan Newman
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Zafft

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Mr. & Mrs. Donald Berg
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Ms. Haralyn Goldfader
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kircher
Macy's Foundation

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Ms. Leah Meriwether
Mr. & Mrs. Francis Piel

Family Memberships

Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Adelsberger
Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Andert
Mr. & Mrs. Herschel Asner
Mrs. Rachel Balbach
Mr. & Mrs. Blair Balk
Mr. Edward Barry
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Mrs. B. K. Werner
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Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Willard
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Zafft
In Honor of Mrs. Wendy Finger
Mrs. Rachel Balbach
Mr. & Mrs. Blair Balk
Dr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Gordon
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Zafft
In Honor of Dr. Joan Oliver
Mr. & Mrs. Julien Worland
In Honor of Mrs. Nancy Rohan's Bithday
Ms. Mary Baer Fisher
In Honor of John & Jody Ross
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Walther
In Honor of Ms. Alberta Slavin
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Epstein
In Memory of Mr. Robert B. Ackerburg
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Walther
In Memory of Mr. Anatol "Ted" Balbach
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Benveniste
Ms. Alison Reaser
In Memory of Mr. Robert Finger
Mrs. Rachel Balbach
Dr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Gordon
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Zafft
In Memory of Ms. Mary Jones
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Walther
In Memory of Todd Ryan Patrick Patrylo
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Patrylo

Family Memberships Encourage Success & Show Support

To those with children participating in our program, if you have not already submitted your family membership, please consider doing so soon. Our goal is 90% participation by families. Currently, we have 52% for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

Membership letters were released in June and we have provided membership information below for those not already participating. We are hopeful that your satisfaction with the program will be reflected in an enthusiastic response. Family Memberships of \$75 include:

- Expanded parent informational programs & coffees
- A copy of the bi-annual PathNotes newsletter
- An extra copy of the monthly activity calendar for the family
- A pleasant evening at the Annual Meeting and Pot-luck Dinner
- Membership dues are good through May 31, 2009
- Family Memberships of \$100 will be acknowledged as a "Sponsor" at the Annual Meeting

Please send family membership contributions payable to:
Pathways to Independence
200 S. Hanley, Ste. 507
Clayton, MO 63105

Parent Name(s): _____ Participant's Name _____

Address: _____

Phone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

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A Note from the Executive Director, Craig Strohbeck, CTRS

One morning recently on my way to work a song played on the radio that reminded me of a time in my life when times were tough and I needed something to pick me up. I remember during the same time, my mother hearing the same song and remember her telling me how it brought her to tears as she also felt the words to this song was so fitting to our situation. She told me she had been driving at the time as well and had to pull the car off the road. As I listened in the car, I was touched again at how this song fit the lives of families and participants of Pathways to Independence. The following are lyrics to a song by the musical group Alabama entitled, "Angels Among Us":

*I was walking home from school, on a cold winter day.
Took a short cut through the woods, and I lost my way.
It was gettin' late, and I was scared and alone.
Then a kind old man took my hand and led me home.
Mama couldn't see him, but he was standin' there.
I knew in my heart he was the answer to my prayers.*

*I believe there are angels among us
Sent down to us from some where up above
They come to you and me in our darkest hours
To show us how to live, to teach us how to give,
To guide us with a light of love.*

*When life held troubled times and had me down on my knees.
There's always been someone to come along and comfort me.
A kind word from a stranger to lend a helping hand.
A phone call from a friend just to say, "I understand".*

*Ain't it kinda funny at the dark end of the road
someone lights the way with just a single ray of hope.*

*(bridge :)
They wear so many faces, Show up in the strangest places,
Grace us with their mercy In our time of need*

Many of you have experienced what some may call "the dark end of the road" as traditional schooling ended and life after the traditional education began and wondered what was next. Thankfully, Pathways to Independence was just that "single ray of hope." At one time or another, we have been touched by the actions or help of someone we don't know all that well; or can look back on someone who has been a part of our life who made an impression that will never go away. I believe the words of this song reach out in both directions between our participants to their families and friends as well as our family and friends to our participants. I, for one, am thankful for the angels that brought me to Pathways to Independence because in the few short weeks I have been a part of this family, I have met so many wonderful people at events and have had the opportunity to enter many of your homes and been welcomed by strangers willing to guide me with a light of love. As we begin a new era with Pathways to Independence, I look forward to meeting each of you and sharing in your dreams as we make Pathways the best it can be. This organization has many angels and with the help of each other, we can take it to new heights.

**Craig Strohbeck comes to Pathways with over thirteen years in the field of Therapeutic Recreation and nearly eighteen years of working with individuals with a variety of disabilities. Most recently with the City of Brentwood Parks and Recreation, Craig has experience with administration, special events, grants and sponsorship solicitation. He is certified as a CTRS (Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist) since 1998, recently completed his service as the Missouri Therapeutic Recreation Society President, serves locally as the Park Chair for the Lindenwood Neighborhood Association in St. Louis City and serves on the board of the Brentwood Foundation for Educational Enrichment. He and his wife Jenifer have three dogs that they share space with in their south St. Louis home.



Craig Strohbeck

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A Note from the Board President Rachel Balbach

Those of you who have met Craig Strohbeck, our new Executive Director, are, I trust, as impressed as I am by his energy, enthusiasm and congeniality. With our management team now in place, I am increasingly confident about Pathways' future. I would like to again thank Program Manager Rose Piel for her hard work and dedication to the organization while we searched for a new executive director.

One short-term concern: our budget for the year just started foresees a fairly substantial deficit, largely due to a drop in contributions. Charged with finding ways to cover that shortfall, Craig made an excellent start by organizing our participation in the Macy's project he described on another page, and that effort was supported handsomely by parent and participant volunteers. Other events and projects must and will follow; I very much hope that we can again count on help and involvement from our Pathways families and friends.

Macy's Shop for a Cause Raises over \$1700 for Pathways

On Saturday, September 20, Pathways to Independence participated in Macy's Shop for a Cause event. Macy's department stores nationwide offer non-profits the opportunity to raise funds through the sale of discount coupons.

Pathways participants, volunteers and staff sold the coupons in advance and in the store on September 20th. We were fortunate enough to have prime locations within the St. Louis Galleria location and raised over \$1700 in only 8 hours!

A HUGE THANK YOU goes out to all the participants selling coupons in advance and to Sky Hanneke and Bryna Sanford who helped in the store. Debbie Goldfader was our top participant salesperson of advance tickets raising \$100 through her efforts. Staff person Gloria Rodgers topped all other pre-sales.

We would also like to recognize our Board Members and family members that helped in advance. Those volunteering in the store on September 20th included: Parents: Cathy Andert, Laura Hanneke and Frank Patrylo; Board Members: Rachel Balbach and Sharon Kircher; Volunteer Adam Balbach; Staff: Craig Strohbeck.



18 Pathways participants enjoyed a great canoe and camping trip the weekend of August 22-24.

CLASSIFIEDS

Pathways has the following needs. If you could assist in providing any of the following, please contact the office at 314-863-0202 to arrange a pick-up of these items.

Laser Printer

Gift Cards to Office Max or Office Depot
Cardinal's Baseball, Blues hockey, Rams Football Tickets

Fox Theater, Rep Theater, or Symphony Tickets

Gift Cards to Teacher's Supply Stores:

Bradburn's or Teacher's Lounge

Gift Cards to Michaels or other craft stores

Movie gift cards to the Galleria

Ongoing Computer Support

In an effort to keep Pathways staff focused on our mission, support is needed from time to time to help with computer issues. Consultants can prove costly against the annual budget, however if you know someone willing to donate time and lend their expertise, please let us know.

Dine Out with Pathways

Pathways participants dine out twice a month to continue to build appropriate social skills in the community. Pathways is partnering with local restaurants to turn this event into a fundraiser with a percentage of the total receipts coming back to the organization. Please join us:

**Tuesday, October 21st at
Chili's in Kirkwood.**

For a voucher to support Pathways, please contact Craig or Rose at 314-863-0202 or by email.

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Pathways Welcomes New Board Member: Sharon Kircher

Pathways is proud to introduce our newest member of our Board of Directors, Sharon Kircher. Sharon joined us on the board in August after being involved as a parent for the past several years. Sharon and her husband Tom are the parents of Jeff Kircher, an active participant in our programs. Her previous experience in social work with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and as a Teaching Assistant for 25 years with the Special School District will serve the organization well as we look to continually improve the lives of our participants.

On Pathways, Sharon states she feels it is a terrific organization. She feels it is invaluable to parents and the parents. She feels that parents should not be their child's peer for the rest of their life and that Pathways allows for the participant to be independent of the parents in social interactions. Participants get to go to places they would never get to go if not for the work Pathways performs. She refers to Pathways to Independence as "a real gem."

Sharon has joined the board with the goal of encouraging more parental involvement in the organization and increasing familiarity with other parents through family events and parent workshops. Please welcome Sharon at our Fall Family Picnic and thank her for her hard work to put this event together. Welcome!



200 South Hanley #507, Clayton, MO 63105

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