

-PathNotes-

A Newsletter for the Members & Friends of
Pathways to Independence - Fall 2011

A Publication of
Pathways to Independence

Cindy Werner Speaks to You...One Byte at a Time

Cindy has been a part of Pathways to Independence (PTI) for many years. Each year, she makes new gains and successes and finds new opportunities. In the past year, one area of skill building has come through computer classes offered through PTI and in the community. While she has owned a computer for several years, the classes at Pathways gave her the confidence and desire to expand her knowledge. Recognizing her need to improve typing skills and to become more fluent in the overall use of the computers as a whole, she started by enrolling in our group classes.

Through PTI, Cindy gained skills in researching websites, finding activities in the community, exploring cooking/nutrition sites and keyboarding. She enjoys the problem solving skills and sense of accomplishment that she gained thru the classes. She encourages others in the class as they work in teams to accomplish their task. She likes this part of the PTI courses. Her PTI friends introduced her to Facebook, where she enjoys following the comments on others' pages and reaching out to people, especially on their birthdays. Cindy says that Facebook has helped her connect with her friends in a new manner and to find conversation topics when they get together.

Recently, she purchased a new Apple computer, which operates differently than PCs in many ways. She knew the 1:1 classes Apple offers would help speed her learning curve. While she continues to attend the monthly classes at PTI, she is also transitioning to weekly classes at the local Apple Store. Cindy is learning how to download music and attach photos to e-mails. She finds herself e-mailing and using spellcheck more often. Her increasing computer skills have helped her at work where she has asked to use her new skills, such as making resident labels as needed. She even asked her supervisor at work if she could use e-mail to request time off so she could keep track of her requests electronically.

Cindy has found that the more she participates in computer classes, the more experience she gains and the more self-sufficient she becomes. She recognizes learning the skills will take time, but she feels more independent as she learns more skills. She is hoping to learn to cut and paste, pay her bills online and create a personal budget spreadsheet.

She happily reports, "I'm not in the dinosaur age anymore when it comes to using a computer." We hope that Cindy continues to share her computer skills and enthusiasm with her PTI friends! Her mother followed this up to say that Cindy has been so diligent in this quest to learn. The confidence she has gained through this and other PTI programs over the years has made her more comfortable to invite others into her circle. It has helped her reach out and learn how to best direct the great empathy she has for others. PTI has given her the opportunity to do things she likely would not have had the opportunity to do with friends. We wish Cindy continued success!



Pathways to Independence Included in Combined Federal Campaign

Please include PTI in your CFC designation forms. For the first time, PTI will be a recipient of CFC funds and we ask that you and your friends support the individuals by listing **CFC Code # 13139** on your forms. CFC is a way all federal employees can contribute monthly to the charity of their choice.



-PathNotes-

Pathways to Independence Board of Directors

Officers

Joseph Wilder	President
Scott Clark	Vice President
Rachel Balbach	Treasurer
Susan Newman	Secretary

Board Members

Selma Balk
Steve Dedrickson
John Finkeneller
Kari Hinkle
Sandra Kapsar
Sharon Kircher
Nancy Koenig

Board Resource Committee

Rick Boalbey
Debbie Emmelkamp
Wendy Finger
George Fonyo
Arthur Hoffman
Curtis Ittner, Jr.
R. Troy Kendrick
Barbara Maille
Linda Nissenbaum
Joan Oliver
Tere Owens
Jo Werner
Gene Zafft

Pathways Staff

Craig Strohbeck	Executive Director
Rose Piel	Program Manager
Gloria Rodgers	Program Specialist
Kathi Manegre	Program Specialist
Millie Cova	Program Specialist
Kristen Cox	Program Specialist
Laura Golden	Program Specialist
Natasha Tucker	Program Specialist
Beth Gartin	Project Monitor
Beth Causey	Accounting

Office Address

Pathways to Independence
200 South Hanley, Ste. 103
Clayton, MO 63105
314-863-0202 Phone
314-863-7865 Fax

BOARD BUSINESS

Board meetings are typically held monthly on the
4th Thursday at 4:30 p.m. (excluding June & December)

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

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 events, 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 choice
- Attaining self-realization, independent living, health and security
- Engaging in healthy relationships and using good judgment, &
- Contributing to the community with a sense of purpose, passion and responsibility.

Pathways web address:

www.pathways2independence.com

PLEASE ADD PATHWAYS TO YOUR CONTACTS:

Executive Director, Craig Strohbeck:
craig@pathways2independence.com
Program Manager, Rose Piel:
rose@pathways2independence.com

For your online shopping needs, support PTI when you shop by visiting www.igive.com and choosing PTI in Clayton, MO as your charity of choice or using www.marketamerica.com/pathways2independence.com

-PathNotes-

Pictures Say A Thousand Words...Outcomes Tell the Story...



Of the participants who have been in the program longer than one year, 79% are employed and, of those, 82% have retained that position for more than **THREE YEARS!**
Great JOB!



70% of participants self-report greater self-esteem since joining PTI with 27% more retaining their previous levels of self-image.



75% of participants self-report a greater knowledge of community resources as a result of involvement in the PTI program.



On a scale of 1 (most comfortable) to 5 (least comfortable), the average level initiating conversation for participants involved more than one year was 2.33 while participants involved less than one year was 4. PTI has a near immediate impact!



Parent: *"Skills learned at PTI have really contributed to his ability to handle difficult social situations. This has really, REALLY contributed to his success on the job."*

Large Group Sponsorship Opportunities Mold Lives... (Continued from back page)

Pathways to Independence (PTI) has long been recognized for providing programmed skill building events utilizing multiple community resources, in varied group sizes with a variety of formats. Parents have stated repeatedly how they feel this is the strength of our overall program. It allows participants to experience supported social interaction and community integration in a multitude of situations with a cross-section of the membership. As we all know, the social skills used in a small group setting can be vastly different than when trying to be engaged in a larger circle of people.

Our primary funding partner has placed its focus on supporting small group skill building opportunities (events with eight or fewer participants). This leaves an enormous gap in the delivery of our overall program and basic component to the success participants gain as a result of their involvement. To provide this large group skill component, PTI is offering individual donors, foundations and businesses monthly **SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**. If you would like to partner with us to continue this opportunity, please contact Craig Strohbeck at 314-863-0202 ext. 2.

-PathNotes-

Self Esteem Class Has Lasting Impact

In Shannon's (below on right) words: *"Conversation 101 is one of my favorite activities because I learn to like myself for who I am. One of the classes that meant the most to me was when I made a collage. The collage that we made was things that make us happy. I decided to put the collage in my locker at work because when I am stressed out I can always think of my PTI staff that help me and, of course, all of my friends that I have met that love me for who I am."*



This particular class dealt with self-esteem and began with having participants identify pictures in magazines that they felt described who they are, what they like, and what they like about themselves. They were then asked to make a collage out

of the pictures. While hunting for pictures, most of the participants laughed about things they found and were socially engaged with one another, but one person was quiet and kept to herself.

After the collages were made, every participant was given the opportunity to present their collages to the group and explain why they chose the pictures that they did. When it was Shannon's turn, she commented that all of the pictures on her collage were things that made her feel good. She then said, "I am going to put this up in my locker at work, so when I am sad or upset, I can look at it and feel better." It was an amazing idea and others were encouraged to put their collages somewhere they could see when they were upset. After the collage activity was done, Shannon was much more socially engaged with her peers and offered excellent ideas regarding other ways to foster self-esteem.

At the Fall Family Picnic, the staff leader caught up with Shannon and was told that she still has the collage in her locker and looks at it when she is upset. She also said that a few months ago, her employer made everyone clean out their lockers and Shannon was such a huge advocate for her collage that they allowed her to keep hers where it belongs.

Staff Focus: Millie Cova

Millie Cova, one of our treasured Program Specialists, came to us when her sister Tia, who once served as our accountant, suggested that she might enjoy a part-time position with us. Once she became involved with the participants, she was hooked. In her own words, once she started coming to events, "I realized I really love my role as a program specialist because I get to help people...learn independent living skills which help them become productive citizens."

Millie has a very different background from that of her PTI colleagues. Her primary experience has been in the business world where she still has a full-time job. While we consider that an asset, we think that we can claim that her work at PTI is her first love.

It certainly is not as though she needed this to fill her spare time. Her schedule is packed as she goes from her primary job either to a PTI event or to cheer on her daughters, Audrey (19) and Molly (13) at their practices, games or in their many everyday pursuits.

Millie tells us that her favorite thing about PTI is

"working with the clients and knowing that we are providing a way for them to participate in all sorts of activities where they are learning, interacting with each other and always working toward their individual goals." And our favorite things about Millie are her devotion to the participants and the straightforward way in which she helps them in their endeavors. Millie strives to be a role model to her daughters, but in PTI she has a positive impact and is a role model to over 100 terrific individuals who look to her for advice, guidance and support.



Quotable Quotes:

- *"Who would know to teach a specific behavior if it didn't happen in real life."* - Tom Kircher...PTI is there to recognize the moments that cause a person to feel isolated or to act differently and coach them through the situation. Not all things can be taught in a classroom. We have to experience them to know about the need and know how to respond to it.
- *"PTI allows things to be learned without conscious direction. The usual ways of learning don't work for this group. Those pathways are not intact. Some subgroups may share some similar intact pathways, but with PTI, the staff goes around the impaired to get to the paired."* - Dr. Joan Oliver

-PathNotes-

Enjoy the Benefits of Volunteering:

Volunteering rewards you with many benefits. Some of those might include: gratification from supporting a cause, building relationships, being an important part of change, using your personal skills, strengthening your resume, building job skills, free snacks, and participating in your community.

PTI Participants Give Back Locally

Each month, an important part of the PTI program is to encourage participants to give back. As a means of continuing to build employment skills, interact with new people and learn the importance of contribution to their community, volunteer events are vital to the overall success participants may experience.

Some of the locations PTI participants have volunteered in the past few months include:

Feed My People
St. Vincent de Paul
Creve Coeur Park Trash Bash
City of Sunset Hills
Operation Brightside
Web Innovations & Technology Services
St. Patrick's Center
Greener Game at Busch Stadium
Forest Park
Kismart
Nurses for Newborns
Earthdance Farms

Volunteer events build trust and teamwork while strengthening and supporting the framework of our mission.



Walking Club Volunteer Gets People Moving

If you have ever met Donna Springer, you know how passionate she is about the things she is involved in. As a Registered Nurse, certified personal trainer and member of the St. Louis Track Club, she has combined her talents and interests to benefit members of PTI. She approached us in the summer of 2010 asking how she could share her time, talents and resources; and we quickly found a place where she fit in to a "T" - Walking Club.

Ever since, when the weather cooperates, Donna has met participants at area parks and places of interest to encourage a more well-balanced approach to exercise and overall wellness. She leads the group in stretching and helps participants take the first steps toward their daily goals. She has helped plan the programs and coordinate the groups and has engaged participants in conversation as they explore the pathways located throughout the City and St. Louis County. Some of the events have ended at a local restaurant where she has helped influence healthy meal choices. Participants gain from reading the trail maps or finding the route to and from the destinations. All of these skills she supports through volunteering to walk a couple times a month.



Although it is a simple method of exercise, the benefits reach much further than simply taking a walk. Walking club brings people together to strengthen themselves socially, emotionally and physically. Donna has been key to the success the individuals feel when they walk away knowing how much they accomplished in two short hours of their lives. Volunteering is not just a walk in the park, but a purposeful walk down life's learning pathways.

If you have a skill, talent or interest you would like to share, call the office at 314-863-0202 or email Rose Piel at rose@pathways2independence.com to see how we can work together to support participants as they seek more independence in their daily lives.

Contributions & Tributes April-August 2011

Our deepest gratitude goes to all those who continue to support Pathways to Independence. Please note: every attempt was taken to ensure accuracy in this list and any error or omission is unintentional. Please contact the office if you locate any error.

Leadership Gift

Beckmann Charitable Trust
Lodging Hospitality Management (LHM)

Millennial Club (\$1,000+)

Mr. & Mrs. Tom Kircher

Sponsor (\$150-\$299)

Craig & Jenifer Strohbeck

Friend (\$75-\$149)

Mr. Jeffrey Kircher
Dr. & Mrs. Philip Needleman
Mr. David P. Oetting

Contributor (Up to \$75)

Ms. Barb Berger
Mr. & Mrs. Phil Braasch
Ms. Debora Davidson
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Greteman
Kevin & Margee Grinstead
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Herzog
Mr. Donald Hong
Jerome & Joan Kaskowitz
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Kircher
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Kohn
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence E. Langsam
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Martin
Mr. & Mrs. George S. Newman
Mr. & Mrs. David Rowan
Mark & Adeline Schraier
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Strohbeck
Mrs. Diane Weidle
Mr. & Mrs. Gene M. Zafft

Matching Gifts

Covidien Employee Matching Gift Program

Corporate Contributions

Macy's—St. Louis Galleria (Macy's Shop for a Cause)
Stinson Morrison Hecker, LLP (Dress Down Day)

Foundations & Grants:

Employees Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis
Sara and Fred Epstein Family Foundation

Family Sponsorships FY '11

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Adelsberger
Mr. & Mrs. Herschel Asner
Mrs. Rachel Balbach
Mr. & Mrs. Blair Balk
Mr. & Mrs. Don Berg
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Duvall
Mr. George Fonyo
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Gentemann
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Hanneke
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Hilton
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis and Gerry Hizer
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kircher
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Krekeler
Mrs. Roberta Londoff
Mr. & Mrs. Dale and Karen Meyer
Mr. & Mrs. Lee Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Vaughn Montgomery
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Nelson
Mr. & Mrs. Tom O'Toole
Mr. & Mrs. John F. Pizzo & family
Mrs. Dolores Reis
Mr. & Mrs. William Sanford
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Zafft

In Honor of Hallie Goldfader

Kate Sheldon

In Honor of Vaughn Montgomery

Bill, Sally and Sam Wiltsch

In Honor of Pauline Pizzo

Mr. & Mrs. John F. Pizzo & family

In Memory of Lt. Colonel Nick Clones

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Clones

In Memory of Ruby Dedrickson

Dr. Steve Dedrickson

In Memory of Robert "Chip" Deggendorf

Alice & Mike Walther

In Memory of Evelyn Gordon

Dr. Martin E. Gordon

In Memory of Doug O'Toole

Mrs. Norma O'Toole

Susie Zafft

In Memory of Zohar Rosenblith

Mr. & Mrs. Lewis and Gerry Hizer

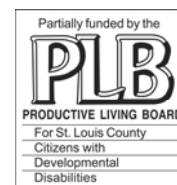
In Memory of Joan Wilder

Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Shea

In Memory of Fern Krueger

Terry & Craig Barton
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Bond, Jr.
Ms. Andrea Capra
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Claggett, Jr.
Ms. Mona Denny and family
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Drummond
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Flynn
Mr. & Mrs. Fritz Gebhard
Patrick Heath Family
Mrs. Bettie S. Johnson
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Krodinger
The Ralph Krodinger Family
Ms. Tammie Krodinger
Mrs. Virginia Leach
Mr. Richard Lottes
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Lucas
Mr. & Mrs. David Macheca
Mr. & Mrs. Philip McDermott, Jr.
Ms. Eleanor J. Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Nonnenkamp
Rene & Margret Nussbaum
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Oberle
Ms. Kathryn C. Palumbo
Mr. & Mrs. Fairfax F. Pollnow
Ms. Lissy Pollnow
Nancy and Andrew Rosner
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sandstedt
Mr. Dan Weidle and Yuan Wang
Mr. & Mrs. Matt Weidle
Ms. Mary Ann Zehnder

MANY THANKS to ALL who participated, supported or donated to the Walk Run 'n Roll in May of 2011!



Millennial Club

PTI would like to introduce the **Millennial Club!** Members of the Millennial Club will be invited to a special evening in May 2012. This special event allows members of the Millennial Club to become more acquainted with the participants of the organization and interact with members of the Board of Directors while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, drinks and live music. Other member benefits: Invitation to the Annual Awards Dinner in June of 2012, special recognition in the PathNotes newsletter and invitation to the annual Fall Family Picnic.

Membership in the **Millennial Club** is an opportunity to have an impact by providing services so participants can be actively involved in their community while gaining the social interaction skills necessary for success in multiple areas of their lives. PTI's cost to provide this service is approximately \$30 per person per hour and the average participant receives 75 hours of support per year at a cost of \$2,250.

Become a member of the Millennial Club by donating a minimum of \$1000 to help provide the supports one individual needs to be engaged socially, emotionally and vocationally in our great community.

-PathNotes-

Board Members Leave Lasting Legacy with over 60 Years of Service

Marlene Zafft

Marlene served PTI from its inception in 1987 through May of this year; nearly 24 years of commitment to individuals with learning disabilities. Having the honor of longest serving member, Marlene brought great vision to the organization and guided us as a member of the Executive Committee through our formative years. Marlene's influence will long be felt by

Dr. Joan Oliver

Joan joined the Board of Directors in 1989 and gave 22 years of her life to increasing awareness and helping others grasp the challenges faced by individuals with lifelong learning disabilities. Her experience in the field of psychology and human interaction provided the expertise needed to guide the organization as more young people sought our services.

Debby Gordon

Debby was there in the beginning, stepped away for a few years and returned for many more, but never once took her eyes away from the future. Her ability to think critically, coach enthusiastically and follow the road less traveled has led the challenge to move beyond anyone's original expectations. Her energy could never be replaced.

While New Board Members Share Their Success as PTI Moves Forward

Kari Hinkle

Originally from the suburbs of Chicago, Kari attended Mizzou for her undergrad degree. During college, she discovered her interests in volunteering, philanthropy and the non-profit sector. Her first professional position was as the Development Associate at the North Suburban YMCA in Northbrook, IL. Later, Kari accepted a position at DePaul University in the Office of Advancement. During this time she pursued her Master's Degree in Public Service Mgmt.

She recently relocated to St. Louis. Kari is employed by Saint Louis University as the Assistant Director of Alumni Relations. She married in April of this year and they reside in Lafayette Square.

She discovered PTI shortly after arriving in St. Louis and immediately felt drawn to our mission and purpose. Regarding her interest in serving on the Board of Directors, "I think the organization does a wonderful job of helping an underrepresented group of people and I feel privileged to have the opportunity to work closely with such a great group of people."



Sandra Kapsar

Sandra (Sandy) graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in 1985, receiving a Bachelors of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Accounting. She worked as an accountant in private industry upon graduation. In 1994 she became a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and started the firm of Sandra B. Kapsar, CPA. Sandy is a member of the Missouri Society of CPAs, St. Louis Society of Women CPAs, American Society of Women Accountants and the Maplewood Chamber of Commerce.

Currently Sandy is enrolled in the Master of Science in Taxation program through Fontbonne University. Sandy has served on various local not-for-profit boards and in 2011, she sits on the Maplewood Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. She joined the PTI Board of Directors in June as a result of recognizing the common disabilities PTI supports that match those of a close family member. We welcome her perspective and insight moving forward.

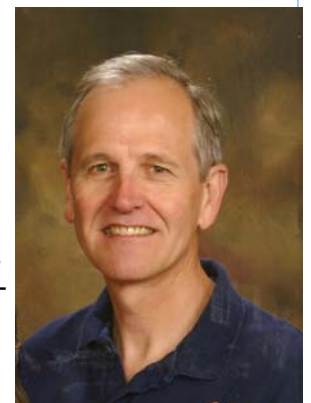


John Finkeneller

John joined the Board of Directors in August following years of connection to the organization through his adult son who is an active participant. He stated, "I'd like to help the Pathways organization succeed and grow."

With his experiences as a CPA in a variety of settings as an accountant, controller and even CFO, John brings a wealth of knowledge and analysis that will have an immediate impact on the bottom line. Currently, he is the owner of his own tax preparation business and is able to utilize the financial and executive management skills required of a small business while applying his dedication and focus to PTI.

John has been active in community pursuits through the Optimist Club of Mehlville, Boy Scouts of America and is an active member of the Crestwood-Sunset Hills Chamber of Commerce.





Pathways to Independence

Specializing in social, recreational, and leisure education for adults with learning disabilities since 1987.

200 S. Hanley, Suite 103, Clayton, MO 63105



PLB Partially funded by the Productive Living Board

-PathNotes-



Large Group Learning Opportunities Now Available Thanks to Leadership Gift: Sponsorships Remain Unfilled

To date, July through December large group events have been sponsored and funded by the Beckmann Charitable Trust. January is funded through a grant from the Employees Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis. February is funded through a gift by Lodging Hospitality Management (LHM). Additional opportunities

are available for the months of March, April, May, June and beyond.

By partnering with PTI, sponsors have the chance to mold the lives of those we support. PTI was able to kick off the large group program thanks, in large part, to a LEADERSHIP GIFT from the Beckmann Charitable Trust. PTI will offer a minimum of two events each month where participants can work to overcome the anxiety of entering larger group situations and develop the social interaction skills that are needed to be successful in this environment. Learning how to enter an existing conversation, the art of listening to multiple individuals and responding appropriately, gaining the attention of a particular individual, being assertive in large group situations, showing empathy toward others, working together towards a common outcome and self-control are all desired outcomes associated with the large group training program. (Continued on page 3)

Save the Date

Monday, Oct. 24th
Toast To Independence
5:30-8:30 p.m.
Urban Chestnut Brewing Co.

February/March 2012
Trivia Night
6:00-11:00 p.m.
Location TBD

Saturday, May 5, 2012
Walk Run 'n Roll
8:30 a.m.-noon

Did you know?

Pathways to Independence is **1 of only 158 Better Business Bureau Accredited Charities** in the Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois region.

72% of PTI participants involved for more than one year are in integrated employment compared to a goal of 18% for individuals with developmental disabilities for the state of Missouri.