

-PathNotes-

A Publication of
Pathways to Independence

A Newsletter for the Members & Friends of Pathways to Independence

Spring 2009

Pathways Remembers Mrs. Alberta Slavin 1930-2008

Mrs. Alberta Slavin was a driving force behind starting Pathways to Independence. Her support of the organization and her commitment to its continuity from day one through her final hours were evident in the successes shared by those served by Pathways to Independence. Unfortunately, Alberta passed away on October 27, 2008, just after the release of our last PathNotes. It is only appropriate to dedicate a portion of this edition to Alberta. Likewise, we would like to thank all those who contributed to Pathways in her honor over the past several months.

Alberta was a founding mother of Pathways and her influence over the years contributed to the overall program growth, support from the Productive Living Board of St. Louis County and networking of the organization to families from throughout the area. Her daughter Linda remains an active participant, attending a variety of events each month and helping in the office. Alberta served on the Board of Directors over the years in a variety of capacities including President, Vice President and Secretary. She was not just a mother, she was an involved parent and leader. She was an advocate for the needs of individuals with learning disabilities. She left a legacy that is ours to carry on. Mrs. Slavin will be missed by all who knew her, but the Pathways to Independence family will forever be touched by her life, her influence and her love of others.



Mrs. Alberta Slavin and
daughter Linda Slavin



Pathways Networking at 3rd Degree Glass Factory

May 15

Third Friday Open House,
6 – 10 p.m., FREE

Auction one piece made on site to benefit Pathways —ONE NIGHT ONLY

Heat up May with free entertainment at Third Degree. See glass blowers turn glowing gobs to gorgeous glass. Shop for glass gifts in the HotShop Gallery. Make a paperweight - only \$30 - or spring glass tile keepsake for \$20. At 8 p.m. it's Rich Simmons with Caravelle for a fusion of hot folk, bluegrass and jazz! Third Fridays are free and family-friendly. Cash bar.

Third Degree Glass Factory, 5200 Delmar,
between University City's Loop and the
Central West End.



Left—Pathways participants enjoy
Eagle Days from the comfy confines of
a life size nest.

Sampling of Pathways Event Highlights

November: Volunteering at St. Michael/
St. George Parish—Clayton

December: Rockettes Christmas Show

January: Paint Me Pottery Class

February: UMSL Basketball Game

March: Springfield, IL Day Trip

—Upcoming Events—

April: Fitness Class

May: Lake of the Ozarks Trip

June: Shakespeare Festival

July: The Munny

August: Cooking Club

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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 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 ADD OUR E MAIL ADDRESSES TO YOUR CONTACTS:

Executive Director, Craig Strohbeck: craig@pathways2independence.com

Program Manager, Rose Piel: rose@pathways2independence.com

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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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A Note from the Board President Rachel Balbach

A truly beneficial trend has been developing at Pathways over the past few months. Many of you know that we've had a series of modest fundraising efforts, ranging from hawking coupons at Macy's to our monthly dinners at restaurants which have offered us a return for our participation and donation cards at Schnucks. A more ambitious project was last month's Trivia Night. Helpful as these have been in a year when grants and contributions will be harder to come by, the financial gain is by no means the only source of gratification.

Craig has reached out to Pathways families. Board member Sharon Kircher has long been concerned that we have not done enough to welcome our families into the workings of the organization and has made it her mission to remedy that. These efforts have had impressive results. Friends and families have been most generous with their time and talents in participating in fundraising efforts and increasingly in volunteering to help at clients' events, in the process learning just how charming our participants are to interact with.

I have been delighted with this splendid response to our needs and am hopeful that it grows. Our volunteers have become a vital part of all we try to do. For this, I thank them most sincerely.

Trivia Night Raises over \$6400

Friday the 13th was a great night for Pathways. In the first fundraising event since September of 2007, Pathways hosted nearly 200 guests at 25 tables in a challenging night of questions. The evening included a silent auction, 50/50 drawing, attendance prizes and other games everyone could enjoy. Special thanks goes out to the Trivia Night Committee chaired by Nancy Koenig, the many volunteers, our sponsors, the families and friends of Pathways and the many businesses who contributed silent auction prizes.

The winning table, with 86 correct answers out of 100 questions, was Team Kerman and included two Pathways Participants. This team has a very successful history at trivia nights throughout the St. Louis area. Congratulations on a job well done.



Parent Informational Meetings

On February 23rd, twenty-one Pathways parents welcomed Mr. Michael Walther, II and Mr. Vincent Krekeler to speak regarding financial and legal considerations their families are facing. Their presentations caught the attention of our families and opened their eyes to strategies they can implement to protect their assets and the assets of their Pathways family member. If you would like more information on their presentation, contact the office for copies of their handouts.

If you have a topic you would like to present that would be of interest to our families or if you have a topic you want to hear more about, please contact the Pathways office at 314-863-0202.

Next Parent Informational Meeting Topic: **Transportation Trials and Tribulations: Driving Us All Crazy!**

A discussion will take place regarding options to get participants to and from events, initiating a volunteer rideshare program and use of public transportation. A guest speaker from Metro will be on hand to share information on Call-A-Ride route reductions and transportation training.

Monday, April 20, 2009
Salem in Ladue United Methodist Church
1200 S. Lindbergh Blvd.,
St. Louis, MO 63131
Please RSVP to Craig at 314-863-0202

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Contributions & Tributes

September 2008-February 2009

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

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A Note from the Executive Director, Craig Strohbeck, CTRS

Last fall as I was engaged in our country's political campaign, I heard the word "Change" over and over again, from both sides of the aisle. Then, as I sat in the memorial for former board member Mrs. Slavin, I essentially heard it again. Her mission was to change our community for the better. Guess what...we can change the lives of our participants. We can improve our community. We can carry on the legacy of Mrs. Alberta Slavin. I invite and encourage you to accept this challenge to contribute to positive changes in the lives of those Pathways to Independence supports. Our clients are "bigger, faster, stronger" as a result of Pathways. The challenging thing for our clients is that they are the recipients of a "blind" disability, one others cannot see. Because of that, they are often overlooked or misunderstood. It is our job to open doors for them, give them new opportunities and teach them the skills that others may take for granted. I know you CAN help in this process. We CAN continue to help Pathways participants learn social cues, build TRUE friendships, have the confidence to learn and use new modes of transportation, learn to find direction both in the car and in life. We CAN help them to present themselves in a way that our society is accepting of and WE CAN CHANGE THEIR LIVES FOR THE BETTER. Let us not forget the legacy Mrs. Slavin left behind and her commitment to our community.

All the Pathways to Independence family needs is your help...



Craig Strohbeck

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Contributions & Tributes

September 2008-February 2009

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

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Excerpts from the 2008 Annual Report

Event Highlights

- 265 Events were held in FY 2008
- Average of 22 events per month
- Average of 7.5 participants attended each event
- 86 Volunteers assisted throughout the year for a total of 383.75 hours of service

Typical Events available to our clients include:

Math Masters
Conversation 101
Game Night hosted in a client home
Community festivals
Professional/collegiate sporting events
Variety of art/cultural experiences
Exercise instruction
Concerts/Theatres
Dinner and Bowling
Pizza and Video hosted in a client home
St. Clare of Assissi Dance
Dining Out Program

FY 2008 Travel Program included trips to:
Nashville, TN, Chicago, IL and camping

*Pathways to Independence was recognized in 2008 as the **Outstanding Recreation Program** for the second time in three years **by the Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis***

Client Information

- 83 Clients were served in Fiscal Year 2008
- Of those clients, we had 1 client from St. Louis City and the remaining from St. Louis County
- 3 Clients participated in our self-pay option so they could benefit immediately from our services
- 16 individuals were on the waitlist for participation at the end of the fiscal year

*In an independent survey performed by the Productive Living Board of St. Louis County, **100% of clients were overall satisfied with the services provided by Pathways to Independence in Fiscal Year 2008***

- 53% of all families enrolled participated in the Family Membership option raising \$4318.
- The 2008 Annual Meeting included a fashion show by clients in our program and a dance. Clients and their families helped Pathways with \$568 in contributions on the night of the Annual Meeting.

Fundraising Success

- The Productive Living Board of St. Louis County is the primary funder of Pathways to Independence providing \$95,790 towards the program costs
- A Bridge Party Fundraising Event was hosted by friends of Pathways to Independence raising \$31,224.
- Total contributions by individual donors was \$28,755 including the 2007 Year-End Appeal Fundraiser that brought in \$15,019.
- Private-pay clients contributed \$1260 in fees to participate.

*Supporters of Pathways received the **PathNotes Newsletter** in November 2007 and April 2008*

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Excerpts from the 2008 Annual Report

Statements of Activities for years ended June 30, 2008 and 2007

Unrestricted Net Assets:	2008	2007
Unrestricted Support and Revenue:		
Contributions	\$60,978.61	\$43,317.00
Grants:		
Productive Living Board of St. Louis County		
Citizens with Developmental Disabilities	\$ 95,789.81	\$ 89,527.95
Memberships	\$ 4,318.00	\$ 4,092.50
Investment Income	\$ 513.53	\$ 2,306.23
Participant Fees	\$ 1,124.32	\$ 2,117.50
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,876.01	\$ 988.10
Total Unrestricted Support and Revenue	\$164,600.28	\$142,349.28
Expenses		
Programs	\$ 96,442.96	\$109,152.41
Supporting Services:		
Management and general	\$ 12,056.35	\$ 18,599.77
Fundraising	\$ 6,154.56	\$ 11,467.34
Total Expenses and Losses	\$114,653.87	\$139,219.52
Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 49,946.41	\$ 3,129.76
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$ 49,592.68	\$ 46,462.92
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 99,539.09	\$ 49,592.68

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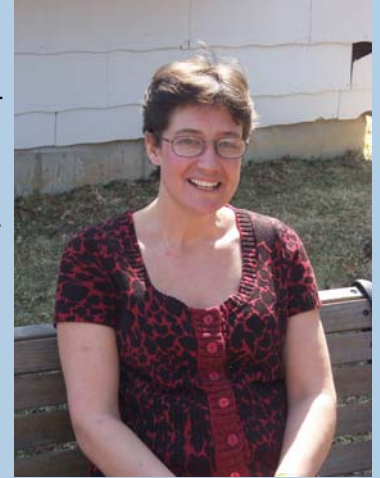
Monika Miller - On Path to Rejoin the Work Force

Monika Miller has come full circle in her vocational path in life. She joined Pathways in 1992. She had a job at Dierberg's in the bakery department decorating cupcakes and packaging cookies and bagels. She stated she loved working and making her own money. It was empowering and made her feel independent. She met her husband who was a volunteer at Pathways. They soon married and started a family at which time she quit her job at Dierberg's to be a stay at home mom and wife.

Monika's son is now in school full time and she has free time during the days. Monika wanted to go back to work full time, but chose to start slowly with a volunteer job. Monika likes animals and decided to apply at the APA. After picking up an application she called Pathways for assistance with filling it out. She came into the office and Pathways staff assisted her with filling out the application and practiced interviewing skills. Monika took the application in and got the position. She volunteers once a week for two to three hours. Her duties include laundry, filling water bowls, and playing with the animals.

Monika states she loves her new job. In addition, she is helping in the Pathways office to learn a variety of skills that may help in other work settings. These are the beginning steps for Monika on her Pathway back into the work force. Monika is meeting new people and increasing her work skills! She hopes to one day attain a position with St. Louis Bread Co. or a like company so she can put these skills to work interacting with the public and contributing in a different way to her family, achieving her goals and taking another step in her path toward independence.

Congratulations, Monika!



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

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