



*Empowering individuals with disabilities
to enhance their quality of life.*

Stakeholders Meeting

By George Beanblossom
Executive Director

Thank you to everyone who came and participated in our annual stakeholders meeting on September 26th. A lot of information came out of that meeting which helps us to focus on the services you feel are important. Here are some highlights.

Doing It Well

1. Value those we support and assist people to achieve their goals.
2. Provide quality health-giving care.
3. Treat people with dignity and respect.

Making It Better

1. Increase volunteers and add more board members.
2. Maintain high quality staff.
3. Achieve long-term financial stability.

Reaching Out

1. Educate community groups on what we do and why we do it in terms of ability awareness.
2. Reach out to our community and other agencies for collaboration to increase opportunities for social activities.
3. Expand the number of people served.

Right now we are setting up committees to address some of these topics. We need help with developing revenue streams to be able to provide additional services. We especially would like more board members and volunteers to work on these committees. If you are interested in being involved, please give me a call at 360-371-9355.

Volunteer Opportunities

- 1) Serve on the CCS Board of Directors. If interested, call Rhonda at 360-398-1510.
- 2) Join the new fun(d) raising committee. If interested, call Rhonda at 360-398-1510.
- 3) Paint a fence at Cascade Home. If interested, call Emily at 360-398-2052.
- 4) Paint interior spaces or complete minor repairs at Crestview Home in Mount Vernon. If interested, call Leah at 360-424-5584.
- 5) Fill in gravel parking lot pot holes at Cascade Vocational Services in Bellingham. If interested, call Kristin 360-647-9087.
- 6) Paint a wall at Pinestreet Home. If interested, call Luke at 360-354-7540.

Touched by Angels

By Brian • Long-Term Care Advocate

This is a message that everyone should hear. It is my experience of love found at Cascade Christian Services.

I am a 55-year old father of four who has spent 15 years living with disability and mental illness in my immediate family. It is so difficult to put into words the hardships that a family, marriage and loved ones face on a daily basis in order to care for a loved one that experiences any sort of disability, either physical or mental. For me, I probably would not be here today if it wasn't for my faith. It was my faith that has gotten me through some very difficult times.

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I had built many successful businesses, but unfortunately was a casualty of the economic melt-down. Afterwards, I could have continued on as the workaholic I had been for most of my life and aggressively build a new business or, take a back seat, let someone else build the business and I could finally follow a passion that I have always had for as long as I could remember. So I followed my heart to help others in any way that I can for the rest of my life.

I decided to take a job with Cascade Christian Services caring for people who have some sort of mental or physical developmental disability.

I knew my reasons for taking the job, but I couldn't understand

why anyone else would take a job that paid so little. It wasn't long until I had my answer. The love and compassion that I saw each person so caringly and tenderly give to those served by CCS was very moving to me. I could see it in the eyes of the employees I met that they deeply cared about the well-being of those they supported.

They say that a company's employee actions and attitudes are a lot of the times a reflection of leadership. Well, when I finally got a chance to spend a little time with the executive director of CCS, I quickly saw why the love and compassion was so abundant throughout the organization.

So why did I want to write this? I feel the community as a

whole, as well as the employees, need to know just how much of an impact CCS and all its employees are having on so many lives and how appreciative so many people are for what they do on a daily basis.

We may only see an individual served by CCS around town being supported, but I am a witness that so many more lives ranging from family members, loved ones and the community benefit from what CCS does.

So this father, representing the love and gratitude of people you have directly and indirectly helped, says thank you to everyone at CCS.

If angels are amongst us, I say thank you to God for allowing a few to reside at Cascade Christian Services.

Cascade Training Center Update

It is our pleasure to share that our agency's training program is evolving to meet the needs of our staff and the community. Since November 2011, there have been about 60 employees who have completed the necessary state approved 75-hour basic training we offer. Then they have successfully taken the State Home Care Aide Certification examinations. Recently we became an approved site for the home care aide state testing by Prometric, the testing company.

Two years ago we recognized the great need for a concentration in the training aspect of Cascade Christian Services' mission toward empowering and providing quality care to individuals we support. Training Director Allison Hill was also aware of the need for community members to have access to quality, accredited training for working with individuals with disabilities. With ever increasing mandated regulations and our own agency expansion, the Cascade Training

Center was established and has proven its worth as credentialing is now required for many long-term care positions at CCS.

The training center received a great amount of positive feedback and commendations in 2012, which enabled us to serve more students. To help with the additional classes and training requirements, early this year Cascade Training Center added Lyndra Iddings as the program coordinator. Lyndra's experiences managing CCS Home Care, as well as her work with our Vocational Services, made her a good match for assisting Allison.

Cascade Christian Services training center strives to continue providing quality training for every student who enrolls in the dozens of courses offered. If you are interested in signing up for any of our courses, please visit our website, cascadechristianservices.org.

Thank you to our Summer Donors:
Third Christian Reformed Church
United Way of Skagit County
United Way of Whatcom County

Employer of the Quarter, Fall 2013

Millard Mall Services

Quality team. Quality Services. Quality People.

Cascade Vocational Services has selected Millard Mall Services as our employer of the quarter. While celebrating National Disability and Employment Awareness month in October, CVS knew we had to select an employer who goes out of their way to encourage a diverse work environment. Employment Specialist, Joe Pruitt, quickly identified Millard Mall Services supervisor, Hoapa Mucaria, as an ideal candidate. She not only hired three applicants from Cascade Vocational Services since June of this year, but also works with several other organizations with similar missions.

Pruitt had this to say, "When I initially met Millard Mall Services Housekeeping Manager Hoapa Mucaria, she told me that she doesn't look at job applicants as having disabilities but as people that can or cannot do the work she requires of them. She said she doesn't let what other people say about a potential employee influence her decision on giving that person a chance. Hoapa tells me people just need a chance. Although she believes in giving people a chance she also has expectations of employees giving their best effort. I've seen her on many occasions working side by side, step by step, with new employees teaching how to properly remove stains, debris and other trash from mall halls."

Hoapa expects her employees to work hard, yet she is patient and willing to stay at work as long as it takes to help a new employee see what she's trying to teach them. Joe has witnessed Hoapa encourage workers to not give up at times when they were frustrated. She accommodates employee request as long as she is able and it's fair to the housekeeping team.

Hoapa has hired three CVS employees and also has employees from other supported employment agencies on her crew.



Melinda Schrieb on the job with Millard Mall Services

Cascade Vocational Services has provided Millard Mall Services with screened applicants, job training support and assistance in trouble shooting any challenges. Applicants were able to try out tasks and tools for the job in order to be sure it was a good job match. Supported employment has had an impact on the coworkers at Millard Mall Services as well.

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People work alongside one another and see their coworkers go beyond what is expected and are willing to always do better.

“Hoapa has treated me with respect and allows me to support CVS participants on her crew as I feel necessary. I’ve seen workers get off to a not so good start and become successful with strong words of encouragement and practical training of fundamental cleaning.” said Pruitt.

Most important is the impact Hoapa’s positive attitude, high expectations and support have had on our participants. Kyle Wilson, the first CVS applicant who was hired, stated that “Hoapa is understanding and she will work side by side with people when it gets very busy in the food court.” Melida Schreib, our only female applicant adds, “Hoapa is a good boss and she has a good team at Bellis Fair Mall”. Finally Ken Huber is grateful he has a “steady pay check”, adding that it is “fun exercise” as well.

The Bellis Fair Mall is celebrating 25 years with a brand new look. Included in the upgrades are a change in architecture to have a more natural Pacific Northwest feel with warmer colors and textures of the outdoors reflected inside. In addition there are new tile floors being installed throughout the center. This will take a lot of maintenance. Next time you are visiting Bellis Fair Mall take a look around at the environment. The hard workers at Millard Mall Services are hard at work to keep it clean and inviting.

Thank you Hoapa Mucaria for creating opportunities for everyone!



(Left to Right:) Hoapa and Kyle at Bellis Fair Mall

“Hoapa is understanding and she will work side-by-side with people when it gets busy in the food court”

-Kyle Wilson, CVS applicant and Millard Mall Services Employee

CASCADE VOCATIONAL SERVICES is a private, non-profit organization committed to expanding employment opportunities for people with disabilities throughout Whatcom County. CVS is a division of Cascade Christian Services, which has been serving Whatcom County since 1978.



Cascade Vocational Services
Opportunities for Everyone

1611 N. State St. Bellingham, WA 98225
(360) 647-9087 www.CascadeVoc.org



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We're on the web!
www.cascadechristianservices.org

Cascade Christian Services Newest Board Member Susana Rodriguez

Kristin Nguyen • Program Director
Cascade Vocational Services

Susana began working with Cascade Vocational Services in 2008 after she had graduated from Meridian High School. Susana was an enthusiastic young lady who brings a smile to all those people who come in contact with her.

In 2012 a position on the Cascade Christian Services board of directors opened. Board President Rhonda Howard said, "Susana was my first choice when asked if I had anyone I felt might be a positive addition to our board of directors. I had the opportunity to work alongside her when we did flower baskets at Cascade Gardens. Her positive attitude and willingness to challenge herself inspired me. Susana has insight and thoughtfulness when life presents challenges. I recall I had just planted a hanging basket and was trying to attach a hanger to the basket when it flipped over onto the floor. I was embarrassed and frustrated! Susana rolled her chair over to where I was kneeling down. Taking hold of my hand, she said



with a huge smile on her face, 'Oh Rhonda! Don't be upset. At least it was only this one and not the whole rack full of plants.'

That's Susana. Look for the light in the darkest situation. Look for all the positives. Don't measure success by one small failure. She is a shining light, always."

Susana was unanimously approved as the newest member of this very important team.

When asked why she was interested in serving CCS, Susana stated, "It's cool!" As a person served by our organization Susana can offer insight to policies, procedures and how we provide services in our community. Susana recently participated in the agency stakeholders planning meeting and made it very clear she wants less supports. She wants to be as independent as possible.

Susana is currently seeking employment. She has had experience in customer service, watering, cleaning toys and shelves as well as sorting. She is a kind and welcoming friendly person who loves to visit with people. If you or someone you know is looking for these traits in an employee, contact Cascade Vocational Services (360)647-9087 and we can put you in touch with her.

An Institution Is No Place to Live

By Mary Nestle-Klyn • Program Director
Cascade Supported Living

I first met Mary where she lived in a state institution. As I was leaving Mary held my hand and asked repeatedly if we were going to take her home with us. It was very difficult to tell her no. But I did say I would do everything in my power to bring her to our program.

My next impression was seeing Mary's eager and happy face the day we came to pick her up. "I'm really going with you this time?" she asked. "You are not going to leave me here?"

It was with a full and happy heart that I was able to say, "Yes, we are taking you to Lynden with us."

Not only had Mary never lived in her own apartment, she stated she had never had her own room. The day we picked her up and took her out for a celebratory milkshake, we discovered it was the first time she had been out to eat in more than a year.

Mary is woman with a developmental disability, yet institution life was not a good fit for her.

When we first arrived at the state institution in June to meet Mary, we felt we were stepping into a movie from the 1950s. My introduction to institution life started by being personally assaulted by one of the patients and having two staff drop the

assailant to the ground right in front of my face.

We observed clients screaming, disrobing, pounding the floors and having altercations on each of our visits. It made my heart ache for Mary living in such chaos. There was never a time during either visit that I could not hear screaming and yelling. Sweet Mary resided in a shared room sleeping on a cot with a dingy plastic mattress on top of metal springs. Imagine her delight when she discovered that a bed had been donated to her with a queen-sized mattress and box springs for her new apartment room.

At the state institution, she spent the majority of her days reading and copying scripture alone in her room. When she grabbed my hand and asked me if she could pray with me, I knew she would be a good fit for Cascade Supported Living (CSL).

It took several weeks to finalize the details, but at the beginning of August we finally learned Mary would be coming to CSL. Getting Mary home was an adventure of its own. She was filled with energy – excited and nervous. Mary had not ridden in a car for nearly a year. She kept us alert with conversation, stories and questions about her new life with us.

Mary came to us with very few belongings lumped into three black trash bags. Her first full day home she chose to

go to True Value to pick out items for her bathroom and kitchen, to Rite Aid to pick up toiletries, and then to McDonald's. She was exhausted, but delighted. It is the small things, such as Mary telling a kind clerk at True Value, "I am telling your boss you get a raise!" that confirm for me this was the right thing to do. Mary deserves this opportunity to find community and a real, forever home.

Your continued prayer for this transition is appreciated. I also need to give a gigantic thank you to my gifted team here at CSL who came together to make this happen. In order to transition Mary out of the institution, we had to hire and train staff for our fourth 24-hour cluster.

We were the only supported living program that even took the time to see if Mary would be a fit. God bless Cascade Christian Services. Truly, all are welcome here.



Board Of Directors

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