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SUMMER 2015

cascadeconnections.org



April is Officially Autism Awareness Month

Currently there are more than 3.5 million Americans living with some form of Autism Spectrum Disorder, the name given to describe the manifestation of the disease from minor to severe. Three main areas characterize autism: social interaction difficulties, communication

> challenges and a tendency to engage in repetitive behavior.

The causes of autism are only beginning to be understood. Researchers have long looked for a single cause but there is increasing belief that autism is instead a complex disorder with many factors involved. The number of people

known to have autism has increased dramatically since the 1980s, at least partly due to changes in how the disease is diagnosed. Currently the estimated rate is that 1 in 68 people have some form of autism. (continued on pg. 3)

Find us on **Facebook**

Cascade Connections has a new Facebook page! Please visit us at:

and Like US!

Summer 2015 Newsletter

Cascade Connections

PO Box 3174 Ferndale, WA 98248 (360) 714-9355 cascadeconnections.org

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TRAINING SCHEDULE | MAY & JUNE 2015

Break

Orientation and Safety Classes – May 4 | 9am - 3pm

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70 Hour HCA Courses – Starts May 5

CPR/FA Courses – May 7 | 9am - 12:30pm

Oral Care, Basic Care and Prevention – May 18 | 11:15am-1:15pm

Orientation and Safety Classes – June 1 | 9am-3pm

70 Hour HCA Courses – Starts June 2

CPR/FA Courses – June 4 | 1pm-5pm

Monitoring Residents for Changes in Condition – June 9 | 10am - 11am

Skin Care – June 9 | 11:15am - 12:45pm

Understanding Mental Illness: Depression – June 9 | 1pm - 2pm

HCA Core Class – June 15-19 | 9am - 5pm

Please visit us on the web at cascadeconnections.org to learn more.



EMPLOYMENT IS FREEDOM

Cascade Connections' commercial operations are growing. On April 1, 2015, our vocational department expanded our custodial operations to include our newest customer, Department of Homeland Security. We are now cleaning the Border Patrol stations across Whatcom County.

This contract provides new employment opportunities for twelve individuals with disabilities and increases the number of work hours for an additional eight. These are great jobs with livable wages. Employment is often far more than just a paycheck. Employment in

our community allows us all to build relationships, status, and independence. Employment allows us to afford freedom that otherwise may not be possible.

One of the crew members is Mark. He has been working with Cascade Connections since 2001, and was selected for this crew because he has a long track record of a solid work

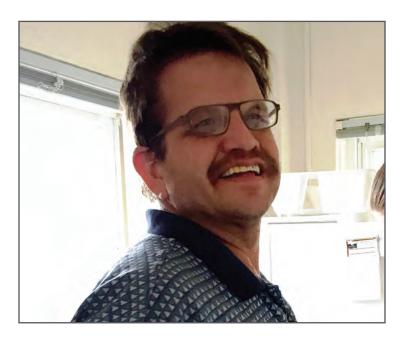


ethic and great attention to detail. He is also friendly and supportive to his coworkers and the tenant in the building he cleans. He says his favorite task is vacuuming.

Mark also works with our Home Care department, which provides him support to live safely and independently in his own apartment. His care aides are able to assist with meal planning, shopping and preparation. Mark says he likes working with his care aides because they are nice.

Mark is looking forward to his upcoming paycheck. You may soon see him in downtown Bellingham shopping for a new CD in the Rock and Roll section. Congratulations to everyone who has been hired through our contract with Department of Homeland Security. We are confident you will all provide quality custodial services.

RUSSELL'S STORY



Russell arrived in Bellingham on a February afternoon in 2013 with a bag, cell phone and laptop. He had no job, little money, no place to live and nothing but his hope and optimism. When remembering this time, Russell says, "I came to Bellingham and found out I couldn't stay at my girlfriend's house. I went to the shelter the next day and stayed there for a while." The homeless shelter helped Russell make a plan, get connected with medical and housing services and eventually, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Russell's Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor contracted with Cascade Connections in October 2013 to provide Independent Living Services for Russell. From the start, Russell was very proactive in participating in services, always on time or early, following up when asked, and working hard on whatever projects were at hand. In November 2013, Cascade Connections helped Russell procure a job at Soy House and was on hand to help him learn and maintain a dishwashing job. Since Russell had to walk home from work late at night, his job coach helped him purchase a bicycle. Russell now enjoys the freedom of riding it all over Bellingham. Russell remembers that, "Lan was my coach until I got a job at Soy House. Then Joe became my job coach. He comes and sees me once a week on Thursday and talks to me and my employer. Now I get to wear gloves and white T-shirts and all."

Cascade Connections also helped Russell obtain his own housing last summer. With a job, a home, furniture, friends, and a bicycle, Russell truly had a home! To help him in keeping his new home, Russell became a client of CC's Home Care program. Now a client of two programs with Cascade Connections – Vocational and Home Care – Russell has flourished with the support he receives at home and at work.

With two Home Care Aides, Russell says that some of his favorite things about having them come are that "Cascade caregivers take me to places", and "I like cooking lasagna with my caregiver". Cascade Connections' care aides help Russell with problem solving, medical issues, going to appointments, meal planning and preparation, and so much more. Care aides enjoy working with Russell as much as he enjoys working with them. Russell shared, "There are many people like me. They should work with Cascade." We couldn't agree more with Russell!

Russell's success would not have been possible without your prayers and your generous financial support. By partnering with us you help us provide the needed supports and training to help people like Russell develop their gifts and talents so that they can live independently and thrive in their community.

Autism continued...

The consensus among mainstream autism researchers is that genetic factors predominate. Environmental factors that have been claimed to contribute to autism or exacerbate its symptoms (or that may be important to consider in future research), include certain foods, infectious disease, heavy metals, solvents, diesel exhaust, PCBs, phthalates and phenols used in plastic products, pesticides, brominated flame retardants, alcohol, smoking, illicit drugs and vaccines. Vaccines have attracted much attention, as parents may first become aware of autistic symptoms in their child around the time of a routine vaccination. Parental concern about vaccines has led to a decrease in childhood immunizations and an increasing likelihood of measles outbreaks. However, scientific evidence has not shown a causal relationship between the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine and autism, or that the vaccine preservative thimerosol contributes to the likelihood of autism.

In our culture the Autism Spectrum Disorder is often thought of as a childhood condition. Focus is placed on children and the importance of early detection and intervention. However, autism is a lifelong condition. Because people change as they move through the different phases of life, appropriate treatments and support change as well. Because each person is a unique individual affected in a unique way, our goal is to provide programs and support across a person's entire lifespan. Quality of life depends not only on a good foundation provided in childhood, but also on ongoing support tailored to an individual's educational, medical, social, recreational, family and employment needs.

1.Buescher et al, 2014

2.www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/symptoms

For a perspective on what it feels like to have this disorder, check out the following YouTube videos:

https://youtu.be/ZfzqBCC3oas https://youtu.be/vNZVV4Ciccg

CASCADE CONNECTIONS UNVEILS NEW LOGO, BRAND AND VISION

Cascade Connections unveiled their new logo, brand and vision at two ribbon-cutting ceremonies in Bellingham and Ferndale. Cascade Connections' Ferndale office ribbon cutting ceremony, held on March 12, was sponsored by the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce. Cascade Connections' Bellingham office ribbon cutting was sponsored by the Bellingham/ Whatcom Chamber and Commerce, and held on March 24. Chamber members, government officials, community supporters, agency staff and friends celebrated these events with beer sponsored by Boundary Bay Brewery and sampled delicious food. Two lucky attendees won Seattle Seahawks Jerseys, while others won gift certificates and all received a commemorative mug. Thanks to all the people who made these events a success.













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